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CHRONICLE
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HOSTEL MEETING ENDS IN CHAOS

By Luke Bartlett

A HEATED meeting between charity bosses and residents ended on a hostile note when it was cut short by 25 minutes.

Around 100 angry residents grilled members of Expectations UK at Summerhill Community Centre in Coseley over plans to build a 65-bed hostel for men.

Tempers flared as crowds fired questions at Expectations UK's chairman of trustees Marc Blanchette over major refurbishment proposals for New Bridge House in Bayer Street.

Proposals would see the former care home site transformed into a 65-bedroom hostel for men over the age of 25 – excluding those with arson convictions or offences of a serious sexual nature.

Mr Blanchette addressed residents gathered both inside and outside the venue on the application submitted to Dudley Council. Questions and concerns were raised over the type of residents the hostel would accommodate and the location of the site.

Mr Blanchette stressed the charity had a 'rigorous' process in place to vet those they allowed into the hostel.

Doorstep

He said: "We have a rigorous assessment process. We do not take sex offenders or arsonists."

A resident and member of the nearby 1st Coseley Scouts team, said: "We have been here for over 100 years, we are going to be opposite where you are. We have about 80 kids, volunteers, I don't want this place opposite to where we are operating."

Another resident said: "We do not want this on our doorstep."

But the meeting came to an abrupt finish after Mr Blanchette announced he would be taking no more questions 25 minutes ahead of the 7.30pm finish.

Angry residents crowded around him to ask further questions and commotion spilled out onto the streets when the Expectations UK team were followed outside. Crowds circled the cars of those representing the charity and demanded answers.

Around 2,000 people are said to have already signed a petition , with residents able to submit their objection to Dudley Council until Monday.

Coseley East councillor Susan Ridney said: "I wanted to hear what people had got to say. There was a lot of hysteria, but there were also quite serious questions that deserve an answer."

The charity has been asked for a comment.

PERMANENT WREATH HONOURS FALLEN HEROES

John Crabtree OBE, Lord Lieutenant of the West Midlands and the Mayor of Dudley, Councillor Alan Taylor, lay the wreath

Respect – Brian Lee and John Dean

A PERMANENT steel wreath was laid in Woodsetton to mark the centenary of the end of the First World War and the re-dedication of a war memorial.

The Mayor of Dudley, Councillor Alan Taylor, Lord Lieutenant of the West Midlands John Crabtree OBE, Captain Andy Peters and the Army Reserves from Dudley, Dudley Sea Cadets, and Royal Air Force Air Cadets were all on hand to pay tribute at Woodsetton War Memorial, on the corner of Sedgley Road and Parkes Hall Road, on Sunday.

Royal British Legion representatives attended, along with members of St John Ambulance, the West Midlands Fire Service and pupils from Dudley College's public service department.

Black Country Brass Band played as the wreath, made by Edward Cartwright, was laid. Labour councillors for Upper Gornal and Woodsetton, Keiran Casey and Adam Aston, helped to raise money for the wreath and organised the service.

The Woodsetton War Memorial, originally located at Mount Tabor Methodist Church, was moved in 2016 to save it from falling into disrepair.

Councillor Casey said the event was "important" to pay tribute to those who died. He added: "We raised over £30,000 to get it moved and now we can hold services there."

CRISIS

Troubled firm G4S faces battle to keep control of prisons

UNDER-FIRE security firm G4S faces a battle to hang on to its other prisons after losing control of the troubled HMP Birmingham.

The Winson Green jail has been taken into government control after a damning inspection.

Now, MP Emma Reynolds is questioning whether HMP Oakwood, near Wolverhampton, which houses more than 2,000 inmates, should also be taken back by the Ministry of Justice.

G4S was stripped of control ofHMP Birmingham following rising violence and widespread drug abuse. Prisons minister Rory Stewart said 'drastic action' was needed to rescue HMP Birmingham.

Warley MP John Spellar said: "It is absolutely the right decision. Clearly there has been a serious failure in senior management."

The Government has taken over HMP Birmingham for at least six months and said it would only hand back control when it was confident G4S was capable of running it.

But Labour MP for Wolverhampton North East, Emma Reynolds said: "We have to question G4S' capability to manage their prisons, including Oakwood."

The contractor insists it will be business as usual at the Featherstone jail and the loss of HMP Birmingham would have no impact.

● Crisis – Page 2

NUISANCE

Order launched to ban off-road riders

NUISANCE off-road riders will be banned from parts of Dudley under a public spaces protection order.

The order was signed off by Councillor Karen Shakespeare, cabinet member for environmental services. It bans motor vehicles, motorbikes and quad bikes from 11 sites across the borough. Fixed penalty notices of up to £100 can be issued.

INSIDE

Final class for keep-fit Jean

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Zoo rewarded after visitor reviews

Zoo director Derek Grove with the award

KEEPERS at Dudley Zoo are roaring with joy after the park was awarded a certificate in recognition of excellent feedback from visitors.

Director Derek Grove said receiving the Trip Advisor 2018 Certificate of Excellence was a 'great boost'.

He thanked visitors for their positive comments about the 40-acre attraction.

The accolade, which has since been framed and put up near the visitor entrance, reflects consistent high ratings left about the zoo and castle on the Trip Advisor travel website. Derek said: "We're always delighted to hear visitors have enjoyed their experience at the zoo and that our continued investment in new enclosures, new species and improved facilities is valued.

Beach

"This year we've had new play equipment installed, we've refurbished our toilet facilities and our new beach has been especially popular, with seating areas giving parents some chill-out time while youngsters enjoy playing in the sand." He added: "Our latest enclosures have great indoor and outdoor viewing areas which is wonderful for both our animals and visitors.

"Many of our animals, in particular our primates and tigers, look forward to seeing our visitors as much as our visitors enjoy seeing them."

Dudley Zoo boasts a 1,600 strong exotic animal collection, and visitors can also take a tour around the 11th Century Dudley Castle also on site.

Prison slipping into state of crisis, claim

THE Ministry of Justice has been accused of failing to stop the G4S-run HMP Birmingham 'slipping into crisis'.

Chief Inspector of Prisons Peter Clarke said 'somebody must have been asleep at the wheel' after publishing a damning report on the prison.

He said conditions had deteriorated dramatically and the HM Prison and Probation Service had now taken control from G4S. His report, from an inspection at the start of this month, uncovered an 'appalling' squalor and high levels of violence.

He said since the last inspection 18 months ago standards had dropped and called-for improvements had not been made. "The inertia that seems to have gripped both those monitoring the contract and delivering it on the ground has led to one of Britain's leading jails slipping into a state of crisis," he said.

Decency

Mr Clarke added: "It cannot be the case that the only time urgent action is taken to restore decency in a prison is when an inspection report is published. Surely somebody must have been asleep at the wheel."

Prisons Minister Rory Stewart said: "What we have seen at Birmingham is unacceptable and it has become clear that drastic action is required to bring about the improvements we require."

HM Prison and Probation Service has taken over its running for an initial six-month period, a move welcomed by G4S, which had run the jail since 2011.

A new governor has taken charge and an initial 30 extra officers are to be deployed. The jail's capacity is being reduced by 300. At the end of July it had a 1,269 population.

The report said staff had become 'worn down' by chronic staffing shortages and had 'gradually relinquished authority' to the prisoners.

Police & Crime Commissioner David Jamieson, said: "For too long it has been overcrowded and not operating as it should."

50 years just flue by, says boss

Managing director Richard Andrews and technical director Kate Birt celebrate Midtherm's 50th anniversary

A DUDLEY business has marked its 50th anniversary.

Midtherm Flue Systems Ltd, of New Road, first started up in the 60s, to support a heating service.

Owner Ray Andrews, aged 74, remembered back to 1968 and the problems of industrial action in the following decade.

He said: "It's been hard work, especially since not long afterwards we started we had the three-day week and the miners' strike.

"At one stage I was selling galvanised garden cloches to pay workers' wages.

"It's just been so great to have so many employees here that have been here since we started and we've even had three generations of family here at one time.

"My father was a metal worker and he worked in a factory. We started with nothing and we employed over 200 people at one stage."

Mr Andrews' son Richard and daughter, Kate Birt, attended the celebration.

Mr Andrews' flue business first started as a support for a company which he was involved with already.

Boiler Man goodies are just Ideal for Baggies fans

ALBION'S new unlikely superstar Boiler Man has launched his own line of merchandise.

Baggies fans can now snap up a Boiler Man T-shirt, mug or even a car air freshener.

The sponsorship mascot, a combi-boiler, already has his own Twitter account, and tweeted: "The moment you've all been waiting for... Boiler Man merch is now online, visit boilermanshop.co.uk to pre-order the hottest merch on the market".

The all-white appliance posted a picture of himself pointing at one of the new £15 T-shirts, which read "I am Boiler Man".

One fan tweeted: "One week out of the office and I miss this? Make sure you save me one before they sell out!"

Another tweeted: "We are the envy of the entire footballing world!!" Another said: "Not Boiler Man Figure yet?"

Boiler Man, a combi-boiler from Ideal Boilers which has a partnership with the club, has been an instant hit among fans and pundits.

Ideal Boilers originally named the mascot "Vinny the Vogue" after its range of boilers, but this was soon dropped in favour of Boiler Man. The Twitter account, @IdealBoilerMan, has attracted more than 3,000 followers since Boiler Man's debut on August 4.

Call for answers on gym proposal

RESIDENTS have demanded answers from fitness company bosses behind plans to build dozens of homes and a gym on a busy Dudley road.

Applicant Fitness4Less has been called on to address concerns over proposals to redevelop the site in Thorns Road, Quarry Bank. Plans would see 14 apartments and 19 townhouses go up along the road near the Merry Hill shopping centre, which carries 24,000 vehicles a day.

Fitness4Less says its existing gym requires 'significant redevelopment to harmonise the site'. Residents had raised concerns over further congestion, lack of parking and loss of privacy.

Councillor Mohammed Hanifsaid: "The ball is in their court and they really now should be coming back to us."

Fitness4Less was contacted for comment.

Real ale festival

THE annual summer beer festival at a real ale pub will run through the August Bank Holiday weekend.

The Swan Inn in Long Lane, Halesowen, is staging the event from August 23 to 27. It is part of the Black Country Ales chain and has 16 handpulls.

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MP dropped as patron of YMCA after revelations

AN MP whose father was a former Mayor of Dudley has been dropped as a patron of the YMCA.

Andrew Griffiths was a patron of the charity but has been told his actions are incompatible with the organisation. He is said to have bombarded a 28-year-old barmaid and her friend with lewd comments over social media during a three-week period.

The one-time High Arcal schoolboy sent 2,000 messages in which he referred to himself as 'Daddy', suggested renting a flat so they could meet for sex and asked them to send him explicit photos, according to reports in a national newspaper.

The 48-year-old married father, whose wife Kate gave birth to daughter Alice Harriett in April, resigned as minister for small business following the revelations.

In a statement, the MP for Burton upon Trent, and a former Chief of Staff to Theresa May, said he was 'deeply ashamed'. He was brought up in Coseley and his late father Bob was a Dudley councillor for three decades and served as mayor.

A spokesman for YMCA England & Wales said: "Whilst YMCA acknowledges the support Mr Griffiths has given YMCA during his time as MP, the nature of the recent revelations does not fit with the values of YMCA and the work that we do with young people".

Rock Houses play is back by demand

A PLAY is set to return to the Kinver Rock Houses after popular demand.

Spirits of the Rock, written by New Kinver Players chairman Martin Ward, will be performed at the National Trust site over the first weekend in September.

It was commissioned last year by the National Trust to commemorate 100 years of ownership of Kinver Edge and the Rock Houses.

Performed inside the largest sandstone cave, known as the Ballroom, audiences will be able to learn of the real life experiences of those who lived there. Four performances will take place and the tea rooms will also remain open until 6.30pm.

Tickets are available from www.national trust.org.uk/events.

Fundraiser at pub

AN Upper Gornal pub hosts a fundraiser for the Black Country Wellbeing Centre from noon tomorrow (Friday). The Gornal Fun Day, at the Spills Meadow in Kent Street, will include a barbecue and entertainment.

School building makeover after £20k win

The centre is in a state of disrepair

A PRIMARY school building is to undergo a £20,000 revamp after winning a competition.

Bromley Pensnett Primary will see its learning hub for parents and children brought back to life after five years of inactivity and falling into disrepair.

Smethwick-based property management firm Novus will oversee a full refurbishment of the building as part of the company's fifth anniversary.

A team of 10 will install a new roof, repair and redecorate the interior and exterior, fit new steps, replace doors and flooring, and install a new kitchen.

Bromley Pensnett Primary School caters for 320 children aged between three and 11.

Head Helen Tomlinson said: "Our community currently lacks many of the services so vital to parents, carers and children at the school.

"This project from Novus will ensure we can really increase the scope of the help and support we can offer to those who need it most."

The refurbishment comes as part of a competition by Novus to support worthwhile projects in the communities it operates in, as voted for by people in the area.

Once works have concluded the Learning Hub will provide a space where parents and carers can visit for support and advice.

The building will provide the facilities for parents to complete health checks and weigh-in sessions and attend breast-feeding clinics.

It will also offer a centre throughout the summer holidays for parents to leave their children at while they go to work.

Hospital will be razed for 100-home scheme

A RUN-down former hospital will finally be torn down to make way for more than 100 homes.

Ridge Hill Hospital in Wordsley has been derelict for years and developers have been given the green light to bring in the bulldozers.

The site already has planning permission for 129 homes and part of the hospital has already been knocked down. Dudley Council has given permission for the remaining buildings to be cleared. They include the Keeling Centre and former nurses accommodation blocks.

Ridge Hill Hospital

Nearby residents have long called for action over the derelict hospital buildings, which have been become run-down and a magnet for arsonists and vandals.

Several bids to put homes on the site have been lodged since the hospital closed more than a decade ago, but none has yet come to fruition.

Once demolition is complete, preparatory works will be carried out on the site while the search is launched for a developer. Planning agents Cushman and Wakefield said the work would be 'managed to limit the impact on neighbours'.

Wordsley councillor Matt Rogers said he was pleased the development was finally moving forward but that he hoped concerns over an increase in traffic would be addressed.

He said:"I have expressed concerns about traffic."

He added: "We have had antisocial behaviour in the area and it will be good to have some new life in the site."

Documents submitted with the plans said: "The outline permission for residential redevelopment will support housing growth and the effective use of previously developed brownfield land.

"The site is previously developed land and has been vacant for a number of years."

Truckers show support for Rachel

Andrew Day with his wife Rachel, of Dudley, with the charity lorry convoy

DOZENS of lorries took to Black Country roads for a charity truck convoy.

The Kingswinford Charity Truck Convoy saw 44 lorries drive across the region to help raise awareness of organ donation.

The annual event is organised by Andrew Day, aged 45, of Dudley, whose wife Rachel, 42, is fighting a terminal illness which causes her immune system to attack her organs.

She had a transplant after being diagnosed three years ago but it was rejected by her system. She needs another one but is yet to find a match.

Saturday's convoy began at the Hilton Park Services on Junction 10a of the M6 before journeying through Wolverhampton, Bilston and Dudley. The HGVs headed towards Stourport for a charity auction in the evening.

HGVs on The Keyway, Willenhall

Lorry driver Mr Day said: "We hold the convoy every year – it's for organ donor awareness to get the word out further that more organ donors are needed to save people's lives.

"My wife had a transplant a few years ago because her immune system keeps attacking her organs. She needs another transplant now."

Lorry drivers travelled from as far as Bristol to take part. Mr Day says he will get the support of Wolverhampton Council next year.

"Rachel really enjoyed herself and was grateful of the support from the drivers and the public," Mr Day added.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Crews pull man clear of flat fire

A MAN was rescued from his Black Country flat by firefighters after a blaze broke out when a cooker was left unattended.

Firefighters got the man out of the property after the fire started in Price Street. Crews from Dudley, Brierley Hill and Tipton stations were sent to the address.

West Midlands Fire Service said a man had to be led to safety by the crews who were wearing breathing apparatus.

The occupier also received a precautionary check-up from paramedics.

The incident prompted a warning from fire chiefs to never leave cooking unattended.

The fire service said on Twitter: "There was smoke damage to the kitchen and some of the flat.

"It's fortunate we were able to get the occupier out. We hope he will make a full recovery.

"It's important not to leave cooking unattended, it's very dangerous."

Lupus information day held at college

A LUPUS information day is being held in Dudley.

The West Midlands Lupus Information Day will take place on October 6 at Dudley College, The Broadway.

It will run from from 1.30pm with registration from 1pm.

Tickets are free and are available by visiting https://www.lupusuk.org.uk/west-midlands-info-day-2018/ or by emailing info@lupusuk.org.uk for more information.

Town hall stage for summer ball

A SUMMER ball is to be held at Dudley Town Hall next month.

The event will take place at the St James's Road venue on Saturday, September 1, between 8pm and 11.30pm. It will include an evening of ballroom, Latin American and sequence dancing.

Tickets cost £6.50, which includes reserved seating. To book, call Fiona Bennett on 01384 243451.

Line dancing night to aid tumour charity

A CHARITY line dancing night is being held in Brierley Hill Civic Hall tomorrow night (Friday).

The Lex's Liners event takes place from 5.30pm to 11.30pm in aid of the Brain Tumour Charity.

It will include line dancing workshops and dance shoes will be on sale.

Tickets are £12.50 for dancers and £6.50 for non-dancers. Call 07412 656076.

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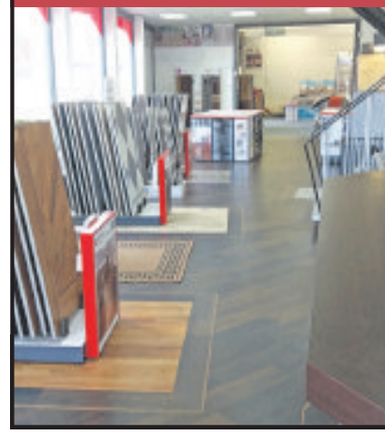

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Shop a Chop Shop campaign launched

POLICE have launched a Shop a Chop Shop campaign following concerns around car key burglaries and car-jackings in the West Midlands.

It comes as vehicle crime has increased over the last two years driven by the demand for parts to repair write-offs, sold as repairable by the insurance industry.

Around five times more vehicles, mainly luxury models are sold at auction as fixable write-offs rather than vehicles to be scrapped for spare parts. It's suspected this is inspiring criminal gangs to steal cars to order for spares. The vehicles are broken down at 'chop shops'.

Fall in identity fraud numbers

IDENTITY fraud has fallen for the first time since 2014 but remains high with more personal information available online, according to a report.

Fraud prevention body Cifas recorded a five per cent drop in identity fraud in the first half of this year compared to the same time last year, falling from 89,199 to 84,463.

There was a 12pc cent fall in the volume of bank accounts being targeted and a 34pc drop in attempts to obtain mobile phone contracts.

But there was a 12pc rise in fraudsters after plastic card accounts, while identity fraud against online retail accounts was up 24pc.

BBC won't appeal the Sir Cliff case

THE BBC has said appealing after losing the High Court case brought by Sir Cliff Richard over its coverage of a police raid on his home 'would inevitably mean an expensive legal cul de sac and one that would simply prolong Sir Cliff's distress'.

It said: "Instead the BBC is writing to ask the Government to consider a review of the law in this important area to protect the right to properly and fairly report criminal investigations, and name the person."

TUC hits out over rail fare increases

THE Trades Union Congress has hit out at rail fare increases and called again for services to return to public ownership.

TUC analysis found that some annual season tickets will go up by up to £163 a year in the latest round of increases..

General Secretary Frances O'Grady said: "This is an insult to hard-pressed commuters.

Maria backs apprenticeships path

Maria Collins and Charles Bamford of IMI Precision Engineering

AN award-winning female apprentice has urged young people to consider the vocational learning route after receiving their exam results.

Maria Collins, who works at the Fradley site of Birmingham-based IMI Precision Engineering, believes apprenticeships offer school or college leavers a fantastic way to accelerate their careers and earn while they are learning towards a possible degree.

The 21-year-old trainee engineer, from Burntwood, is confident this path should no longer be seen as 'the last resort' and points to recent figures from her Ofsted 'Outstanding' training provider In-Comm Training that it could represent a £100,000 opportunity, which equates to the combined amount an apprentice earns in wages and the debt they avoid on university tuition fees. She has just completed a three-year apprenticeship in mechanical engineering and is now setting her sights on securing a degree while developing her practical skills at the world leader in fluid power and motion controls.

"I saw a lot of my older friends get their degrees and then struggle to find jobs so I thought I'd take a look at doing something vocational that would have a position at the end of it," explained Maria, who was named as the 'Outstanding Learner of the Year' at the In-Comm Training Awards in June. It has been a great decision. The experience has been fantastic. I've learned a lot about the basics in engineering, such as milling and turning, and then gradually developed more advanced skills in circuit design and 3D CAD design.

"This was done part-time, with the rest of my week spent working at my employer, getting to know staff and understanding how I could apply these new skills to my own role."

Nerves turn to delight on A-level results day

THE moment of truth came and went for thousands of nervous youngsters across the Black Country and Staffordshire as they opened their A-level results.

Many schools and colleges saw their pass rates rise and happy teenagers were all smiles as they secured places at university. One head teacher at Dudley's Ellowes Hall Sports College was delighted.

Report by Heather Large

Star pupil Olivia Saunders, from Lower Gornal, marked herself as the first pupil to ever achieve two A* grades.

Olivia, aged 18, said: "It feels amazing. I'll be starting in October at the University of Birmingham to study history. After that I'd like to stay on to get my teaching degree."

Charlotte Collins helped continue the college's success streak after achieving an A* in English literature, an A in sociology and a C in psychology. The 18-year-old had to learn to walk again after a battle with scoliosis whilst undergoing her GCSEs – but was determined it wouldn't stop her.

Head Alan Jasper, said he was 'over the moon' with the results, with almost 50 per cent of entries at A2 or equivalent awarded grades A* or A.

Meanwhile, almost half of all students at St Edmund's Catholic Academy in Wolverhampton achieved at least one A* or A grade.

Kyra Martin-Chambers, from Wolverhampton, had battled with sickle-cell anaemia. The 18-year-old even had to do coursework from New Cross Hospital whilst undergoing treatment. But now, thanks to achieving a distinction* in law, merit in health and social care and a D in sociology, the teenager will now be studying adult nursing at Coventry University. She said: "I'm just overjoyed because it has been really hard over the last two years."

More students achieved top grades at St Thomas More Catholic School with the numbers gaining A* to A rising from 9.3 per cent to 16 per cent and the number of students gaining A* to B increasing from 25 to 34 per cent.

There were celebrations at Aldridge School too, where Alesha Peace is off to Oxford University to read classics after achieving an A* in classics and English literature.

Joseph Leckie Academy's Sixth Form was celebrating a 100 per cent pass rate in 21 subjects with successes in both vocational as well as A Level courses.

At Cheslyn Hay Sport and Community High School Sixth Form 99 per cent of students achieved A* to E grades. The number of students achieving the highest qualifications rose again with 36 per cent achieving A*-B.

Success at the double for twins

Sisters Lauren and Charlotte Smith outside the entrance at Q3 Academy in Great Barr

THEY'RE not just twins, they're best friends – and now sisters Lauren and Charlotte Smith are set to continue their adventures together at university.

The siblings left Great Barr's Q3 Academy with beaming smiles and in high spirits after discovering they both secured a place at the University of Exeter.

Family and friends came together for a shindig at the weekend before the pair leave home for higher education on their 19th birthdays.

Charlotte said: "I'm a little nervous but excited. It's definitely been time-consuming but I feel it was all worth it in the end." Lauren managed to scoop three A grades in history, maths and religious education, while Charlotte was awarded two A grades and a B in chemistry, history and maths.

The 18-year-old students said they were happy they secured a place at their first choice of university and will now continue studying side by side.

Lauren said: "We're the best of friends. It's been really good studying together. A lot of people don't have anyone to revise with, but we had each other."

College is celebrating a record in pass rates

STAR performers at Sandwell College were last week celebrating yet another outstanding set of A Level results with their students.

Youngsters at Central Sixth campus once more achieved an impressive 99 per cent pass rate overall, with a 100 per cent pass rate in a record 19 subjects.

Tamara Herrington got A*AA in geography, biology and politics. She is now going to the University of Durham to study politics.

Katy Forrester got A*AA in English language and literature, drama and theatre, and sociology.

She is on her way to Lancaster University to study theatre and English literature.

Kaven Judge is now set to start his higher apprenticeship with KPMG after accomplishing a hat-trick of As in accounting, business and economics. Kaven will be earning a salary and supported to achieve his accounting and finance degree and professional accountancy qualification by the world-leading professional services firm.

Sameer Qadeer also gained triple A grades in biology, chemistry and maths, and David Nemec gained an A,B, and an A. Sameer will be reading medicine at Birmingham University, while David will be studying for his degree in biomedical science at University College London.

Director of Central Sixth and Assistant Principal, Dr Matt Lamb, said: "Due to the recent reforms A Levels are now more challenging than ever before, and so it is a tribute to staff and students to have received these excellent results."

Wide choice in uni places via clearing

YOUNGSTERS who are still seeking university places are likely to face a wealth of choice as institutions scramble to attract good candidates on to their degree courses.

University leaders suggested that there could be more people who are using clearing this year to apply to university for the first time.

A snapshot survey suggested that, even before results were released, more than 26,000 courses were available in clearing for students in England only.

For those looking for degree places through clearing this summer, there are suggestions that they are likely to find it is a buyers' market.

Nine in 10 UK institutions have at least one course listed in clearing, the survey found.

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Ex-con vows to help keep youths out of trouble

A FORMER offender who spent four-and-a-half years in prison is set to launch a community centre to stop troubled youths following in his footsteps.

Wade Cooper, from Upper Gornal served more than four years for drug dealing, violence and death by dangerous driving. He is now looking to launch the Black Country Wellbeing Centre to deter youngsters from crime.

Wade Cooper

Now aged 34 and full of remorse, Mr Cooper trained to become a personal trainer while in prison and has turned his life around.

He said: "As a child I came from a broken family and I got expelled from school. I was taking drugs and selling drugs.

"Before I knew it I had a 10-year jail sentence and I was in for different things. I was in for four years and seven months, but that's in the past now."

Mr Cooper said his mission was to stop children from following in his footsteps by hosting talks at the centre on Vale Street. It is due to open in September.

He said: "I want to help the kids get in the right direction."

Record numbers are now in work

THE number in work in the West Midlands hit a record high of 2.79 million in the three months to June, but numbers claiming unemployment-related benefits has surged.

Figures show there were 133,000 unemployed in the West Midlands – a rate of 4.5 per cent of the working population – for April to June, down 6,000 on the previous quarter and a fall of 31,000 on the year.

The claimant count, which includes Jobseeker's Allowance and the unemployment element of Universal Credit, increased by 6,200 last month to 906,100, almost 108,000 more than a year ago.

In Dudley it was up by 85 to 7,430, some 3.8 per cent of the working population.

Homes planned

ELEVEN new homes could be built on land in Stourbridge Road, Dudley. An outline application has been lodged with Dudley Council. It includes six apartments, two town houses and three terrace houses.

Objections to waste depot development

The waste depot on Lister Road

RESIDENTS have objected to plans to demolish buildings at a council waste depot and replace with a new office block and car parks.

The plans for Dudley Council's Lister Road depot also include a gritter storage canopy, vehicle spray booth and vehicle storage unit. The depot, which dates back to 1938, houses the council's waste services staff, gritting trucks and pothole teams.

Objectors say the plans – which include expanding car parking on public open space – will increase traffic, noise and pollution. One resident said: "We live right opposite to the planned entrance to the car park – this would have a detrimental effect to our property with increased traffic and the noise it brings."

Another said: "A development of this size and scale would have a very damaging effect. There is no consideration to residents to all the extra traffic, pollution, loss of green space, loss of privacy and property value."

Another said it was vital that residents in Lister Road and the surrounding area did not lose any green space. St Thomas's ward Councillor Shaukat Ali has also objected. He said: "The accumulative impact of this on the residents who live in the area appears to have been ignored."

A design and access statement submitted with the application states: "The Lister Road Depot has significant underlying major investment needs, which are estimated to be in excess of £900,000. The site has serious structural defects and dilapidated 'temporary' buildings. A number of buildings areuneconomical to repair and require demolition and replacement."

Cancer fear weedkiller still used by councils

COUNCILS in the Black Country have said they will continue to use a weedkiller after an American court ruled that it 'causes cancer.'

Dudley and Sandwell local authorities have both said they will still use glyphosate, despite fears it could be harmful.

Concerns over the chemical hit the headlines after a Californian man received £226 million in damages from Monsanto, who use it in their best-selling product, Round Up.

The company has denied it causes cancer and said it will appeal against the ruling.

Both councils said they used the chemical in its parks and green spaces.

Dudley Council has said it also uses the product on highway verges and it relies on advice from government agencies when choosing chemicals.

Councillor Karen Shakespeare, cabinet member for environmental services, said: "We know that maintaining our green spaces and keeping our roads and pavements clear of weeds and obstructions is important to our residents.

Monitor

"As part of our weed control programme, when required, we do use products that contain glyphosate, a product that is approved for use in the UK & EU. However, we will continue to monitor the situation and review any advice issued by the HSE and or the Government, and will act accordingly."

Sandwell Councillor Bill Gavan said: "We only use very small amounts of products containing glyphosate in our parks and green spaces. No guidance has been issued in the UK regarding any change in how they are used.

"Weedkillers are used strictly in line with the manufacturer's safety information and Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH) assessments. Staff who use these products are issued with personal protective equipment and have received training on their safe use.

"We have no current plans to stop using them – we will of course comply with any guidance given by the Health and Safety Executive, Environment Agency and DEFRA regarding their use."

Open day inspires next generation

MP Mike Wood, Westfield chairman Frank Turne, Harry Myhillm aged 12 and Millie Bell, nine

A DUDLEY sports car manufacturer looked to inspire a new generation of engineers at an open day.

Westfield Sports Cars saw more than 50 children, parents and carers turn up at its headquarters in Kingswinford to learn more about the industry. Enthusiastic youngsters got to get to grips with the manufacturer's work and engage with a whole host of cars, pods and other technologies.

Wendy Rayner-Hall, Westfield's programme manager, said: "It is about bringing in the next generation of people. It is about inspiring." The event came as part of the Institution of Engineering and Technology's bid to get organisations across the UK to open their doors to parents and children.

It also saw involvement from Dudley South MP Mike Wood who said it was 'fantastic' to see so many engaging with the technology on display.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Choir launched at open evening

A NEW ladies choir will launch at an open evening next month.

The Wall Heath Ladies Choir was founded earlier this year and the launch opening evening will take place on September 13, from 7.30pm, at the Church of Ascension's Church Hall, in Dudley Road.

The choir was founded by chairman Lorraine Beasley and musical director Claire Speake. Rehearsals take place every Thursday at the church hall between 7.30 and 9.30pm – which will start with a programme of music for the Christmas festivities.

Subscriptions cost £3.50 a week. Anyone interested in joining, can all Lorraine on 01384 350981.

Help needed to tidy round church

GREEN-FINGERED volunteers are needed to help tend to the grounds of a landmark Dudley church.

The St John's Preservation Group is looking for people who can help with work to clear the grounds at St John's Church in Kates Hill.

Volunteers are needed for two-hour sessions to help maintain the graveyard and nature reserve. Help is also needed with litter picking, weeding and sweeping.

To help the group email savestjohnschurch@hotmail.co.uk or call 0787 119 5042.

Man charged over £700k factory fire

A MAN has been charged after a fire ripped through a factory causing £700,000 worth of damage.

Paul Hancox, of Larch Road, Kingswinford, appeared before Dudley Magistrates Court charged with arson following the blaze on August 10.

P S Patterns Ltd, in Navigation Drive, Netherton, near Brierley Hill, was destroyed in the fire. Around 50 firefighters tackled the flames.

Hancox, aged 27, was remanded in custody to appear before Wolverhampton Crown Court on September 10.

Martial arts centre set for vacant building

A FORMER office space will be turned into a martial arts training facility after plans were given the green light.

Dudley Council has approved the plans for the vacant building in Cinder Bank, in Netherton.

A planning officer report stated: "The proposal which comprises the change of use from one 'main town centre' to another would bring a vacant property back into active use, positively impacting on the local area.

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IN MY VIEW
with Mark Andrews

Unexpected saviour brings hope to Beatties

WHEN questioned about allegations of Dickensian working conditions at his Sports Direct warehouse, Mike Ashley famously told MPs "I'm not Father Christmas. That came shortly after he had told them "you can't house train me."

Given that, many will understandably be sceptical that he is being touted as the knight in shining armour running to the rescue of Beatties.

But still, any port in a storm, and after spending £90 million buying the House of Fraser chain out of administration, Mr Ashley is at least making the right noises about keeping 80 per cent of its stores open, and turning it into the 'Harrods of the high street'.

Many will wonder why Mr Ashley has chosen to invest in such a risky venture at a time when people are said to be deserting the high street in droves. I suspect the purchase is far less about making money, and more about boosting his reputation. Saving a venerable department store chain with a rich history will give him a standing in the business world that no amount of discount sports wear ever will.

If this is the case, there is cause for hope. We all know Mike Ashley is not the sentimental type, but if he is looking at a bigger picture then that can only be a good thing.

As for turning House of Fraser into the Harrods of the high street, well I guess the proof will be in the pudding. If the new autumn collection consists of shell suits and Reeboks, I suspect some will consider it only a partial success.

❒❒❒

STAYING on the high street, it has been revealed that Dudley Council's coffers have taken a £500,000 hit since introducing free parking. Now, in the context of the average household budget, half a million pounds sounds like a lot. But when it comes to council finances, it is a drop in the ocean. About £1.60 per head, which seems pretty good value to me.

Certainly better value than the £6.7 million spent on the market place redevelopment a few years ago. And which do you think brings the most people into the town – free parking or block paving?

Yes the high street is still struggling, but imagine how many more businesses would have been lost were people still expected to pay for parking. And how much money would have been lost in business rates, dealing vandalism, fly posters and graffiti were it not for this modest expenditure?

The decision to provide shoppers with free parking in Dudley was a masterstroke. Maybe some of our other local authorities should follow suit.

Elba statesman – or is 45-year-old actor a solid Bond?

45-year-old Idris Elba, too old for Bond? Whisper it, but Roger Moore was older, aged 46!

Another troubling week for Jeremy Corbyn in the wake of more anti-semitism rumblings

Striking similarities to Jezzer – another Jeremy C, Clarkson, eventually kicked out by the Beeb

Wreathgate may lock Corbyn out for good

THE BEST OF PETER RHODES

OFF to the pub for a steak which, in the latest fashion for bizarre methods of serving (chips in buckets, etc), came on a waxed napkin on a breadboard. It was almost impossible to eat because each mouthful of steak contained a serving of napkin but the staff look horrified when I asked them to put it on a proper plate. A reader tells me he was once served a bread roll in a carpet slipper. Any other weird dining experiences welcome.

THE perils of family trees. A reader revisited her home town and called at the local museum in the hope of discovering famous or distinguished relatives. She found a display board used in an exhibition a couple of years ago featuring a Victorian photograph showing her great-great uncle. It should have been a proud moment but the text revealed that "unfortunately his nickname in the village was Farty because his initials were WC". Never meet your heroes.

I SUGGESTED that Idris Elba, now 45, might be a tad old to be embarking on a career as James Bond. A reader points out that the present incumbent, Daniel Craig, is 50. Maybe so. But when he took over the 007 mantle in 2005 Craig was a spry young 37. In Ian Fleming's books, Bond's age is not revealed, and he never ages. However there is a clue in one passage referring to the secret-service retirement age which suggests he is 37.

IN a perfect world for Corbynism, this torrid week of Wreathgate would end with the discovery of Jeremy's Secret Photo Album and all the wicked smears would vanish. Comrade Jez's stock response when challenged about meeting Irish or Middle Eastern terrorists is to put on his most pious expression and say he wants an end to all violence. He does not need to condemn IRA murders because he condemns all murders. He does not need to condemn Palestinian rocket attacks on Israel because he condemns all attacks. He would have us believe he is reaching out to all in the quest for peace. As he said of the Tunisia affair: "I was there because I wanted to see a fitting memorial to everyone who has died in every terrorist incident everywhere because we have to end it. You cannot pursue peace by a cycle of violence; the only way you can pursue peace is by a cycle of dialogue."

SOUNDS terrific, doesn't it? But where, exactly, is the dialogue? How much time has Jeremy Corbyn spent talking to the other sides? Where are the photos of this saintly allotment keeper meeting Israeli families bereaved by Palestinian killers? Where are the pictures of him shaking hands with Protestant paramilitaries in Ulster or comforting those maimed by IRA bombs? Maybe all those images are tucked away in Jeremy's Secret Photo Album. Or maybe not.

A TALE of two Jeremys...The potentially disastrous Wreathgate saga reminds me of Jeremy Clarkson who, having a certain charisma and lots of fans, got away with mistake after mistake until one night he called his producer a "lazy Irish ****" and punched him. That was the tipping point, the end of Clarkson at the Beeb and I suspect we are nearing the end of Corbyn. This prospect may scare his supporters but it terrifies the Tories.

WHY are we waiting? According to the latest reports, police have CCTV footage of suspects in the Salisbury nerve-agent incidents. So why have they not released it? CCTV captures only a moment in time. Figuring out where those people were, and what they did, before or after the filming is crucial and Joe Public may have the answers. So why can't Joe Public see the footage?

AND here's another Salisbury puzzle. Cops seem to have assumed that the bottle allegedly containing the Novichok agent and found in a local park was the only bottle used. For all we know, a second or third bottle may be lying undiscovered or, worse, sitting on somebody's mantelpiece. Again, releasing an image of the discovered bottle might jog someone's memory. But no images have been shown. It is all very odd.

OH, brave new world. My eye was caught by a feature about a new "switching glass" window which can be installed in your bathroom. Flick a switch and it turns from clear to opaque, so you cannot be seen, even if passers-by or your neighbours are just a few feet away. As long as the power is on, your privacy is guaranteed. What could possibly go wrong? You switch on the light, the window goes blank. You disrobe and relax in the bath. You fall asleep. There is a power cut . . .

THIS week's hot news from the world of medical research is that salt is not as harmful as the experts thought last week but vaping is more harmful than the experts thought last week. Anyone care to guess what next week will bring?

TALKING POINT

Weight for it! It's time to accept I'm a fattie

PASS me the chocolate biscuits, I've decided, once and for all to accept my fate, I have no option but to realise I will be an overweight person for the rest of my days on this planet. It's an unfortunate, but necessary admission, for the sake of my sanity.

Yep, the size 32in-waist jeans that looked so good five years ago, are bound for the charity shop, unless I append them with some kind of industrial-strength fastener, but then movement would become difficult and sitting down, impossible.

Recently – as I suffer the catch-up effects of a life of relative contentment, via the occasional pint and kebab/Indian/pizza, etc – things seem to have taken a turn for the worse. It's a difficult situation to come to terms with. When trying on new clothes in a store's changing rooms and being horrified at what you see before you, it's so easy to blame the mirror. Then spend the rest of the day shying away from reflections, neck-down anyway, after landing back home.

You talk things over with your other half, say you're worried about how much weight you're putting on, and then they very helpfully show you a photograph of you from a year ago, which shows the double chins, paunch and general rosy-cheeked glow of a chubby 50-something. Great, thanks for that!

In a light bulb moment, I think it might be something to do with a new inhaler for my asthma, Symbicort, and seeking some kind of vindication, of course I turn to the internet. I search for Symbicort and on entering the 'w' for weight gain, up comes a lengthy list of people who seem to think the drug is the cause for their own expanding waistline!

Armed with this erm... foolproof evidence, I then tackle my GP on the issue and it's not hard to see her difficulty in trying to maintain a straight face. Blood tests follow to investigate the possibility of an underactive thyroid, and cholesterol levels – all to no avail.

So it seems, lifestyle needs to be looked at. I dig out that book my missus bought me (again, thanks!) by a certain lifestyle guru, with advice on workouts and diet, and it soon occurs to me that he (hairy pretty boy with biceps, you know who I mean!) must be in league with a leading supermarket, as all the recipes have the most hard to find ingredients, which will cost an absolute fortune to buy!

It seems everybody these days is on the take. Come the revolution, us fatties will line him and his ilk up against the wall and force-feed them cream cakes, beer and French cheese until they are like the rest of us...

GRAEME ANDREW

A gravy train not a passenger service

I READ a billboard that read 'HS2 Pay Shock'! Well it's not a shock and anyone who is shocked by it must have been living in cloud cuckoo land.

When it started the cost was to be £30 billion and over time it's now estimated that it will cost £80bn and when we speak of such obscene amounts someone somewhere will be financially much better off.

Does the government really believe that we believe for one second that this train is being built for the benefit of Joe Public? It's being built for the rich to get richer as shown by the pay that is being issued. Those people who are being forced out of their homes, businesses being lost, land turned over and wildlife destroyed are the losers.

No one should be shocked that large amounts are paid out to executives and others, it's not a passenger train, it's a gravy train feeding off the money train, the tax payer. These train companies can't even get timetables right, how on earth are they going to get HS2 right?

PETE LOWE
Brierley Hill

Hippodrome reopen call

I WANT to make a protest about Dudley Council and what they are trying to do about The Hippodrome. They intend to knock it down without asking the people of Dudley what they want.

I myself would like it to be open again to give shows like the good old days. There are lots of people like me who like to see those days come back with dances and shows which would be welcome by all ages.

If we went back in the past it was the Earl of Dudley that made the Hippodrome for the people, now this council want to knock it down. They told the committee if they can get 3,000 people to sign, they will think about it.

L HEGLEY
Kingswinford

Fed up of adverts on the Beeb

HAVING watched a fair bit of BBC television I cannot help but notice the adverts we get between every programme.

It can be a break of anything from two to five minutes with no adverts for Gibbs SR toothpaste, or the cleaner that beats as it sweeps as it cleans, it all leaves me a bit Confused.com. No, the BBC have adverts for iPlayer, apps, 'Get Inspired' and radio.

Then of course the television tax itself has its own advert. It must be the only tax in the country that has a television advert all paid for by us the television tax payer or a do they prefer licence holders?

It is time to pull the plug on the BBC finances. If they are as good as director general Tony Hall appears to think, let him put his money where his mouth his is.

EWART J JOHNSON
Warley

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

POST
Dudley Chronicle,
Chronicle Editorial,
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EMAIL
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Cycling participation ended by potholes

I AGREE entirely with your recent correspondent on potholes. My brother's keen and active participation in cycling well into his 60s was effectively ended by an injury caused by a pothole in Wombourne some years ago.

The hole was suddenly and mysteriously repaired whilst he was arguing with the council. It is interesting that during the course of driving nearly 3,000 miles in France this summer I saw only one pothole – and that even the most remote rural roads are well surfaced and maintained. This in a country where road fund tax does not exist. I think if we burned a few hay bales and blockaded a couple of ports, we might see some action.

B WILLIAMS
Wordsley

Thanks from grateful wife

ON July 17 my husband suffered a heart attack and I just wanted to thank everyone involved in his care.

From the paramedics arriving within five minutes to the doctors and every single member of nursing staff at New Cross Cardiac Unit B14.

Not only did they look after him, they took the time to look after me too as I was in shock.

You are all absolute angels.

Thank you so very very much.

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Lower Gornal

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Exam success for youngest councillor, 18

THE West Midlands' youngest councillor is celebrating his second major success in four months after winning a place to study at Birmingham University.

Jake Cooper, a Dudley councillor, said he was 'ecstatic' after achieving an A*, A and B grades in his A-levels after taking exams at King Edwards College, in Stourbridge.

His success is even more impressive as he had to revise while he campaigning to win his Belle Vale ward council seat in May.

The 18-year-old is now looking forward to studying political science and international relations in the next step of a political career he hopes will see him in the House of Commons.

Tricky

As one of the youngest councillors in the country, he admitted balancing a political career and school work was tricky.

"My results were brilliant and much better than I expected," he said. "It was obviously very difficult and I was improvising quite a lot.

"I had to make sure I left another time between campaigning and revising and I stuck to my timetable, making sure I got my college work done and that I think is a good tip for anyone studying."

He said he chose the University of Birmingham because he wants to continue as a councillor while studying and trying to enjoy the student life.

"I'm looking forward to meeting new people and getting involved in the debates and exchanging of ideas," he added.

Hall art exhibition

HIMLEY Hall, near Dudley, is playing host to an exhibition of work by local artists.

The work of members of 90-year-old Dudley Society of Artists is being staged until September 2. There is free entry to the hall from 11am to 4pm each day.

Jean and Ann Bedworth after donating £2,500 to Russells Hall Hospital

Christine Taylor, left, and Jean in 2001

Jean at a celebration garden party to honour her British Empire Medal

Jean Hughes along with her keep fit class at Wordsley Community Centre

Jean Hughes pictured back in 1972

Jean Hughes, front, with members of her keep fit group in 1983

Jean exercises right to retire

FOR more than four decades she has been helping women across the Black Country keep fit – and has never missed a single class.

Now, 46 years after putting on her first session, 82-year-old Jean Hughes has decided to call it a day.

When she started out at Wordsley Community Centre in 1972 she had eight women taking part – and now she has said farewell to 90. Mother-of-one Jean said: "I've always wanted to keep fit. I was going to classes in 1957 in West Bromwich and when I came to live in Kingswinford I joined a class and that's when I was asked to take it over.

"When I took over in Wordsley, there were only eight women but now there's 90. The ladies became friends and it was a lovely friendly atmosphere. It was very difficult to walk out and think 'that's it, I've done it now'. My daughter visited that class for me, knowing that it would be difficult to walk out.

"I had some members with young daughters and then the daughters left to get married and have children of their own, quite a few mothers and daughters over the years."

Jean, from Kingswinford, has shown so much dedication to the fitness cause that she has never missed a class – even when it snowed.

She has also helped to raise £129,000 for charity and has been awarded a British Empire Medal.

"I think we've covered most charities," she said. "It was not just me, it was my group as well. I've got a good group of ladies.

"I had been nominated by members of the class and I said I would accept the medal on behalf of my class because I didn't do it alone."

"I've got about 80 retirement cards and letters from people that don't want me to retire, but after 46 years I feel I want a bit of time for me because it's taken up an awful lot of my time.

"It was a big decision. Now I'm going to wind down and do what I want to do."

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THURSDAY
DUDLEY
7.30pm St Francess Parish Church
Laurel Road, Priory
Joanne 07834686331
NEW GROUP FROM 30th AUG

FRIDAY
SEDGLEY
9.30am & 11.30am Sedgley Community Centre
Ladies Walk
Acess via The Priory
Vinny 07412074954
NEW CONSULTANT FROM Friday 31st AUG

MONDAY
DUDLEY WOOD
9.30am Dudley wood Methodist church,
Quarry Road
Lisa 07986 673899
NETHERTON
5.30pm & 7.30pm Cole Street Methodist Church,
Cole Street
Heather 07729105659/01562 851746

SEDGLEY
5pm & 7pm St Chads & All Saints
High Holborn
Dudley Road
Dee 07913260357
DUDLEY
9.30am Dudley Community Church
Salop Street
Louise 07967 624573
NORTON
7.30pm Scout Association District Hall
South Road
Cheryl 07706633609

TUESDAY
GORNAL WOOD
9.30am Himley Road Methodist Church,
(large car park at rear via Chapel Walk)
Becki 07986 407934
GORNAL
5pm & 7pm Zoar Methodist church, Abbey Road
Becki 07986 407934
NETHERTON
9.30 AM Cole Street Methodist Church,
Cole Street
Heather 07729105659/01562 851746

WEDNESDAY
OLDSWINFORD
3.45pm, 5.30pm & 7.30pm St Marys Church Hall
Rectory Road
Extra Parking at the Crabmill Pub
Kerry 01384833812/07812 055665
UPPER GORNAL
9.30am Upper Gornal Methodist
Church, Spills Meadow
Lynn 07963 539384
NETHERTON
7.00pm Hillcrest School & Community College
Simms Lane
Heather 07729105659/01562 851746
DUDLEY
7.00pm Bishop Milner R.C. Comp School
Burton Road, Entrance off Broadway
Sue 07825354224

THURSDAY
PENSNETT
5.00pm & 7.00pm Pensnett
Community Centre, High Street
Natalie 07931 655339
SEDGLEY
5pm & 7pm
St Chads & All Saints
High Holborn
Dudley Road
Sue 07825354224

DUDLEY
9.30am 11.30am, 5pm & 7pm Central Methodist Church
Cross Street
Sarah
07837950797

FRIDAY
PENSNETT
9.30am Pensnett Community Centre
High Street
Natalie 07931655339

SATURDAY
DUDLEY
9.00am
St Frances Parish Church
Laurel Road
Vinny 07412074954

GORNAL
7.45am, 9.45am & 11.45am
Roberts Primary School
Roberts Street
Lower Gornal
Sarah 07837950797

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The company, which is based in Halesowen, can also assist with repairs and maintenance problems with your current windows, doors and conservatories regardless of who originally fitted them.

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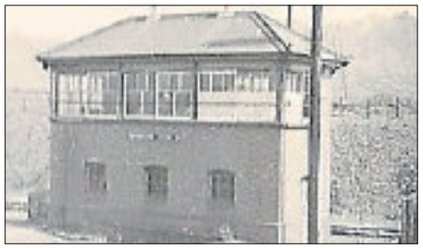
For further information contact Rydale Windows (Manufacturing) Limited on 0800 917 6060 or visit www.rydalewindows.co.uk

A southbound freight in the area of the current excavations

A northbound freight passing the trolley hut

AiM excavating next to the Smestow Valley Path

AiM revealing the edge of the foundation



Wombourne signal box

On track to unearth mystery foundations

OVER four weekends the local archaeology group Archaeology in Mind (AiM) are excavating intriguing foundations discovered at Tettenhall Station.

Fifty metres beyond the end of the platforms on what is now the Smestow Valley Path, a badger uncovered the corner of a concrete foundation, and the Tettenhall Transport Heritage Centre called in the group to help reveal what they might be.

Without disturbing the badgers, AiM began and discovered the base of what is clearly quite a large building.

Photographic evidence shows that the Permanent Way gang

MEMORY LANE

Report by Alec Brew

who looked after the line, had several huts in the approximate area, including a large hut to house their trolleys, a large motorised trolley to carry sleepers and fencing and the like, and a smaller ganger's trolley.

Different

The gang also had their own hut in which to take breaks, and there were two or three smaller ones.

Historically it is believed that, although there was never a signal box at Tettenhall Station like at Wombourne Station, the foundations for one were laid. Will the excavations of AiM reveal that what the badgers discovered, was the foundations of a signal box or the ganger's huts, or something entirely different?

The line through Tettenhall only operated from 1925-65, and there was a passenger service for only the first seven years. The branch, which would have taken the line to Bridgnorth, was never built, and the line became one of the first of the Beeching cuts.

Within the Heritage Centre there is a 00 Gauge layout of the station, and curator, Alec Brew, says: "It would be nice to be able to make this corner of the layout exactly correct."

Dan Brew on his ganger's trolley in Wombourne Station

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Foundry jobs boost in £10m investment

A NEW foundry is being built in Tipton as part of a £10 million investment by Dudley-based Thomas Dudley Group.

It is thought to be the first major foundry to be developed in the Black Country for many years and will mean a sizeable jobs boost for the area.

It is being constructed alongside an existing foundry on the Thomas Dudley Foundry site at Vaughan Trading Estate, Sedgley Road East. A new moulding line has just been installed at the former Duport Foundry site, which was bought by the group in 2014.

The Tipton foundry and the 84-year-old castings foundry at the main Thomas Dudley site in Birmingham New Road were brought together as the Thomas Dudley Foundry division at the start of the year. Work on the new state-of-the-art foundry began last month.

The investment in the moulding line will increase manufacturing capacity by 50 per cent.

Additional work will include a new sand plant, with pouring/casting handling systems and a new extraction system. Next year work will start on providing dedicated finishing facilities including shot blast, core making, warehousing, a filtration plant, compressors and robotic fettling.

Getting a kick from car wash fundraiser

Morgan, Mason, Ryan and Charlie with Amie Weaver

A GROUP of kickboxers are jetting off to Italy to represent their home country in the world championships.

Five students of AW Kickboxing Club, which has bases in Darlaston and Wednesbury, have made it through the British qualifiers and will compete against the rest of the globe in Rome in November.

To raise funds to get them there, the boys have been washing cars at Hurst Hill Primary School in Bilston. So far, along with other fundraising events, they have raised about £2,500.

Chief instructor Amie Weaver, aged 30, who has competed for her country in the past, said: "This is a huge achievement for us.

"I just want to say a big thank you to all the parents and team members who come down to support us."

The students who have qualified for the world championships are Ryan McQueen, aged 13, from Dudley; Mason Dunlavey, 13, from Wednesbury; Morgan McCart, 11, from West Bromwich; Charlie Bache, 10, from Dudley; and Harvey O'Grady, 11, from Darlaston.

Hospice on lookout for new retail chief

MARY Stevens Hospice is recruiting for a new Head of Retail Operations.

The vacancy is the top job in the hospice's multi-million-pound trading company, which comprises the charity's 23 high street shops, its recycling centre, house clearance and furniture collection services, eBay shop and Bridgnorth boutique outlet.

Outgoing head Simon Henwood will continue his 17-year association with the hospice by moving across the organisation to head up its finance department.

Stevan Jackson, chief executive officer with Mary Stevens Hospice Group said: "We are searching for someone at the very top of their game, who will be able to come in and guide our retail provision into the future with creativity and confidence."

For the full job advert and specification, visit www.marystevenshospice.co.uk/join-the-leadership-team

All change as company in shake-up on the buses

A MOVE to reinstate some of Dudley's bus services has been hailed by residents and councillors.

Councillors and residents are hailing the return of a bus stop on Wallows Road in Brierley Hill.

National Express' decision to re-introduce the stop follows campaigning from councillors Judy Foster, Karen Jordan and John Martin.

A petition was launched in March to see the route of the 228 service, which travelled via Wallows Road, reinstated.

A major shake-up of National Express bus routes and timetables will see services carved up across Dudley and Sandwell. The changes to 29 services will see some routes axed and come into effect on September 2.

Changes include: A new timetable during evenings and on Sundays for the 4H service through Hayley Green and Halesowen to Walsall; Route 9, from Stourbridge to Birmingham via Halesowen, will see buses run up to every five minutes along Hagley Road between Quinton and Birmingham; Route 13 from Dudley to Walsall will be known as the 11A. Buses will run up to every 15 minutes between the town and Blackheath, and every 30 minutes to Merry Hill.

History of church to be celebrated

WORSHIPPERS will be celebrating the history of a Black Country church next month.

A special event will be held at Christ Church in Quarry Bank, Dudley, on Saturday September 15 from 10am until 4pm.

A wedding exhibition will celebrate the church's success with unions over the years.

This exhibit will show how weddings have transformed over the years

The public is invited to go along to the event and take in the history of the building.

The church will also be holding a service on Sunday September 16 to give couples the chance to renew their wedding vows.

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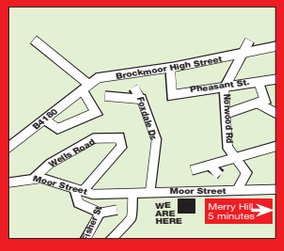

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Mother's sorrow over losing 'beautiful' Ellie

THE mother of a 'sassy, loving' young woman has spoken of the profound effect on the family of her death after being thrown from the bonnet of a moving car.

Dawn Underhill's moving personal statement was read to the court before 19-year-old Luke Hickman, who had been at the wheel of the Corsa, was locked up for causing her death.

Three others were sentenced for their part in what Judge Paul Glenn called 'a cover-up' following the 'prank' that ended in tragedy on the Tesco Extra car park in Dudley.

Eleanor Underhill, aged 20, died from catastrophic head injuries in January last year, eight days after she fell. Her mother said: "Ellie grew up into a beautiful young woman who was not only our daughter but our best friend.

Ellie Underhill

Locked up – Luke Hickman

Ross Bingham, Elly Phillips and Hana Edwards were all sentenced

Zest

"Her sense of fun, her laughter and her zest for life were infectious. She had a knack for making you smile.

"Whilst Ellie was very straight-talking, stubborn and sassy, she was also kind, loving and caring."

Mrs Underhill described how 2017 had been going to be a special year for the family. She and husband Shaun were marking their 30th wedding anniversary and Ellie should have been celebrating her 21st birthday.

The pharmacy assistant's health suffered and she had to take time off. Her husband endured sleepless nights and Ellie's brothers Luke and Ryan had also suffered badly.

The defendants were rebuked by the judge for not taking Ellie to hospital for over an hour and then not informing her family for several more hours while they concocted lies about the circumstances surrounding her injuries.

Hickman, of Wassell Road, Wollescote, Stourbridge, admitted causing death by dangerous driving and dangerous driving. He was sentenced to seven years and 10 months in a young offender's institution. Elly Phillips, 19, of Seymour Road, Wollescote; Ross Bingham, 21, of Hagley Road, Edgbaston admitted conspiracy to pervert the course of justice. Phillips was sentenced to six months in a young offender's institution and Bingham to four months. Hana Edwards, 19, of Grove Road, Wollescote, was given an 18-month community order and 150 hours of unpaid work after admitting perverting the course of justice.

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Nature reserve labelled 'hidden gem'

A LONELY Planet author is drawing national attention to Saltwells Nature Reserve in Dudley borough after calling it a 'hidden gem'.

Travel writer and photographer Oliver Berry suggested the Netherton site, maintained by Dudley Council with the help of community volunteers, as a place to visit. His comments follow a report from Trainline who teamed up with the author to uncover some of the British Isles' best-kept secrets. It showed train bookings to the West Midlands, namely Birmingham, has risen by 163 per cent this summer.

Saltwells Nature Reserve is famous for its bluebells in spring and is loved for its many sculptures. It is home to woodpeckers and wild orchids and is teeming with the most species of dragonflies in any locality in the Midlands.

Saltwells is at the heart of the Black Country Geopark and Councillor Karen Shakespeare, cabinet member for environment, said: "I am thrilled that our hard work is not going unnoticed."

Whitewater raft accident won't stop Samuel

Property tycoon Samuel Leeds seen with a team of volunteers on a whitewater raft in Uganda, before the disaster

Millionaire missionary in Uganda fall drama

'I WILL grow as a person from this experience and I have tremendous faith in God – my knee might be broken in various places, but my spirit remains'.

Self-made millionaire Samuel Leeds says he is determined to bounce back after shattering his kneecap during a freak white water rafting accident on the River Nile.

The 27-year-old is now back at home with his wife Amanda in Lichfield, but his leg is in full plaster cast and he has just been told by doctors he may not be able to walk properly again.

Mr Leeds, a devout Christian, says the set-back will not stop his missions on the African continent, and his work as a successful businessman back home. He had been in Uganda visiting villages benefitting from rain water collection tanks he had paid for when he went white water rafting on an adventure expedition last month.

The raft capsized and he was thrown 20ft down a waterfall when his kneecap hit rocks. After a week of treatment in hospital in the capital Kampala, Mr Leeds is back with his family.

Samuel, with his leg in plaster, at home with wife Amanda and daughter Ruby

Determined

"I'm not the sort of person who is going to let something like this knock me back, I'm determined to prove the doctors wrong," he said.

"I have a strong faith, a loving family and a huge passion for my work.

"It's like Rocky said, it isn't about how hard you hit, but how hard you get hit and keep moving forward."

Mr Leeds is no ordinary businessman, having left school at 16 and first setting out on a career as a magician.

But he soon discovered property and, at the age of 17, he went to a home-buying networking event. He bought a house under market value and rented it out, the first step toward the multi-million pound business, Leeds Group, he runs with his brother Russell. They now own 26 houses and the group, which also includes a construction company, a lettings agency and another firm sourcing properties for investors, has a turnover of £250,000 a month.

Mr Leeds also provides talks at property investment events and writes books. His latest, Buy Low Rent High, has sold 42,000 copies in 15 months.

Inspirational, Arnold Schwarzenegger

Samuel with Richard Branson

He says he has been inspired by successful people he has met. They include Alan Sugar, at a business networking event in London, and actors Arnold Schwarzenegger, and Sylvester Stallone at a 'meet and greet' events in the West Midlands.

But at the core of Mr Leeds' life is religion. He donates 10 per cent of his profits – and his wages – to the Church and helping impoverished villagers in Africa through his Good News All Round organisation.

But disaster struck when they took part on the expedition called the Warrior Camp with students on his Property Investors Academy in Jinja, on the shore of Lake Victoria.

The white water rafting on July 19 was part of the expedition and involved seven of his team, including his brother and sister-in-law Anna.

Anna was also injured when she got taken away down the river and was not found for 45 minutes. Mr Leeds was treated in hospital and his mother, Sue Gray, flew out from England to bring him home, paying £10,000 for the flight a week later. He continued treatment back in Birmingham."

He will now continue his rehabilitation from home with his wife and their daughter Ruby. The couple are expecting a second child next year.

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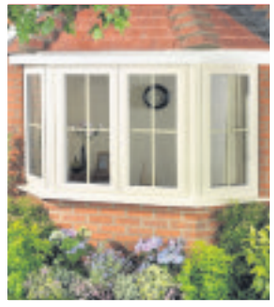

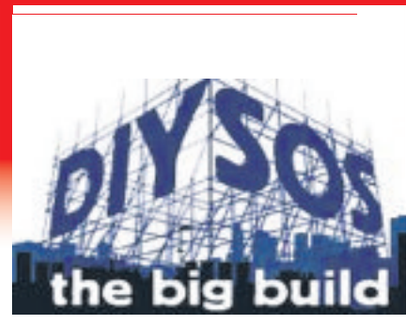

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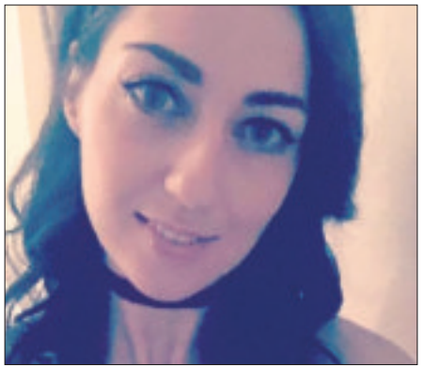
MP's fury at response to crash death

Dudley North MP Ian Austin


Vikki Jones died at the hands of the dangerous driver

AN MP has accused a council of not taking the death of a young mother seriously after taking a year to address road safety concerns.

Dudley Council has proposed road markings and extra signage on Wood Road in Lower Gornal, following the death of Vikki Jones.

But Dudley North MP Ian Austin has accused the council of being too slow after handing a petition in last September demanding safety improvements. The young mother died when her car, which also had her 11-year-old daughter in, was hit by Tyler Kendall's BMW.

It was estimated Kendall hit speeds of 75mph within the 30mph speed limit of the road before hitting Ms Jones' car. He then fled the scene.

The electrician, of Whitebeam Close, was jailed for six years after pleading guilty to causing death by dangerous driving. Councillor Karen Shakespeare said safety improvements were being considered. She said: "It is the driver's responsibility to drive in accordance with the legal speed limit."

Mr Austin said: "Of course it's the driver's responsibility, but irresponsible lunatics are using local roads like racetracks and a young mother has lost her life so you'd have hoped the council would take this more seriously and see what changes they could make more urgently."

Homes plans backed

DOZENS of new homes will be built in Tipton despite concerns about the building project and more traffic.

Sandwell councillors have formally approved the plans for 61 houses to be constructed on parcels of land in Princes End.

Nearby residents objected, saying they believe the development will impact on their quality of life. But the plans were moved without further public discussion when it came before the full council.

Sandwell Council's planning committee had already backed the scheme earlier in the year. In total, 63 homes will be built on council-owned sites bordered by Strathmore Road, Kingsbury Road, Sandgate Road, Ridgeway Road and Henn Street.

Ron Roberts, aged 50, who lives off Arthur Road, whose mother lives nearby, helped organise a minibus taking a group of residents to attend the full council meeting.

"There will be disruption," he said. "There will be traffic coming up and down these roads. We were disappointed not to be able to discuss at the meeting."

The homes are part of Sandwell Council's aim to create hundreds of new homes in the borough over the next three years.

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Jail after dogs filmed attacking caged fox

A MAN who filmed two dogs attacking a caged fox in his back garden has been jailed for 22 weeks.

John Gough, from Brierley Hill, was banned from keeping animals for life after the 'horrific' footage was discovered on his phone.

At Birmingham Magistrates Court, Gough pleaded guilty to causing an animal fight between a dog and a fox, causing unnecessary suffering to a captive fox, and causing unnecessary suffering to a black terrier type dog. He denied a further charge of wilfully killing, injuring or taking a badger back in February 2017, which was later dropped. He had been caught by the police and the RSPCA.

Distressed

The court heard how Gough used his mobile phone to video two dogs attacking a fox which had been trapped in a cage. He could be heard on the video encouraging the dogs to attack.

In another video clip the distressed animal is out of the cage and the dogs are seen to carry on the attack. Both incidents are said to have taken place at Gough's home address in Byron Street on or about May 16. It is not known what happened to the fox.

Officers searched Gough's home and seized his phone, finding the video showing the fox attack along with still images. A fox trap was also found along with equipment used when putting terriers down holes in the ground.

In his vehicle officers discovered two fox tails, a terrier box and shovels.

An officer from the RSPCA's Special Operations Unit, who investigated the case, said: "This was premeditated animal cruelty and both the fox and dog clearly suffered."

John Gough, from Brierley Hill. Picture courtesy of RSPCA

Ready for business festival

PREPARATIONS for the 2019 Black Country Business Festival are in full swing, with a number of sponsorship deals already signed.

The festival, taking place from May 13-24, has been established by the Black Country Chamber of Commerc, needs sponsors and partners to make it happen.

Already, Black Country solicitors Talbots Law; accident repair centre BodyKraft; and DY5 – Dudley's Business and Innovation Enterprise Zone – have signed up to be partners. Casino 36 is a sponsor and official supporters include Wolverhampton Racecourse, accountancy firm Crowe UK and Wolverhampton Grand Theatre.

For more information, visit www.blackcountrybusinessfestival.com, email hello@blackcountrybusinessfestival.com or call 01902 912304.

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Caring nurse Liz picks up top award

Nurse Liz Jones and patient Alizah Pervez, aged 19, who nominated her for the award

A NURSE who helped a teenage girl through years of treatment for a skin disease has won a national award.

Liz Jones, a dermatology staff nurse with The Dudley Group NHS Foundation Trust, was named Psoriasis Nurse of the Year 2018 after being nominated by her patient Alizah Pervez.

Alizah, aged 19, from Stourbridge, put the nurse forward after she saw a poster from the British Dermatology Nursing Group asking for nominations.

The teenager had suffered with psoriasis over almost all of her body and used to have to attend Corbett Hospital three times a week. But she said nurse Liz was always a friendly face while she underwent treatment and ensured she understood everything.

On winning the award, Liz said: "It was a complete shock – I got an email from them one day saying I had won and I couldn't believe it."

Homes plan fears lead to calls for site visit

PLANNING chiefs will visit the site of a controversial homes development before deciding whether to rubber-stamp the scheme.

Dudley Council's development control committee voted for a site visit at the land near to Dibdale Road and Salop Street, where 18 homes could be built.

Councillors were recommended to approve the proposals despite mounting opposition from concerned residents.

By Annabal Bagdi

Patrick Timmins, representing opposition residents and business Blake's Sheds, said: "This is simply the wrong development in the wrong place.

Concern

"If this development is given the go-ahead, it will turn a quiet backwater into a major thoroughfare."

Mr Timmins said a major concern was vehicle access from Salop Street used by Blake's Sheds' articulated lorries to turn.

He said: "We are concerned that if this development gets the go-ahead, with increased numbers of residents living there, the proposed turning circle is totally inadequate given the size of the lorries. It's an accident waiting to happen."

He added Blake's Sheds would suffer, with fears reduced access to the business will impact trade and put the company's team of eight at risk of job losses.

A total of 14 one-bedroom and four two-bedroom apartments will be constructed on the vacant site, near Papa Johns takeaway. Applicant Scott Brown said 25 per cent would be affordable housing, with 75 per cent available for those using Help to Buy schemes.

He said proposals were 'in line' with development policies, adding: "This land is not public open space. This is appropriate for residential development."

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Sunshine and celebs in downtown Miami

IT'S hot, hot, hot in beautiful Miami with its amazing beaches, celebrity harbour front mansions, designer shops and of course all that delicious food.

There is so much to explore here in year-round sunshine.

From the beautiful Art Deco buildings to the up and coming regenerated districts, this coastal US city is quite fabulous for tourists.

The area is renowned for its south beach and hotel vista, but venture away from the sand and swimming pools and there is plenty more to explore.

There is the Art Deco Walking tour, with the Miami Design Preservation League, which includes a look at some of the more well known sites, such as the Versace mansion along the fashionable Ocean Drive which is lined by nightclubs, hotels, bars and restaurants.

The infamous mansion and the Metropolitan by COMO Hotel are among an estimated 800 Art Deco buildings that campaigners hope to see preserved for their historical importance. I can recommend a stay at the Metropolitan Como Hotel in Miami Beach. The staff were amazing and nothing was too much trouble. It was a short two-day visit but their fish dishes were right up my street as was the smashing Eggs Benedict breakfast.

Across to downtown, the popular harbour front is very busy with cruise ships and tourists. Among the attractions is the high-octane Thriller Speedboat with a very entertaining crew, plenty of shops and eateries, favourites include the Bubba Shrimp restaurant – a clever spin-off from the movie Forest Gump starring Tom Hanks.

I loved the shrimp and salads and the staff, as everywhere else, were courteous and nothing was too much trouble.

Miami has a huge Hispanic population with more than half of them being of Cuban heritage and their influence abounds in business and the arts.

ON HOLIDAY

Report by Deborah Hardiman

This, no doubt, has been helped along by the star factor of pop super stars Gloria and Emilio Estefan who found fame with the 80s band Miami Sound Machine.

They also have a harbour home on the aptly named Star Island, and own eateries on Ocean Drive and the exclusive Estefan Kitchen in the city's new designer district.

Then there is Little Havana on the outskirts of central Miami with its jazz bars and sandwich cafes, niche shops, tobacco factories with rolling rooms and antique galleries and the district was declared a national treasure by the National Trust for Historic Preservation.

It has a very Caribbean feel here with the tropical food shops and retired residents gather to play dominoes and discuss politics in the Maximo Gomez Park. Nearby there's even a a memorial in honour of those who died in the Bay of Pigs Invasion in Cuba in April 1961.

Up the road the historic Ball & Chain restaurant and bar plays host to high-profile visitors including comedian Sir Billy Connolly, who has called in with his film crew and seemed to be enjoying the mid-afternoon entertainment put on by the salsa band.

Miami is also seeing major investment in its rail infrastructure to improve public transport, and projects include the exclusive Miami Design District that has attracted names, such as Givenchy and Armani. There is also the hip Wynwood Walls outdoor art museum featuring the Wynwood Kitchen& Bar pioneered by the Goldman family who specialise in revamping previously rundown communities, but be warned there is a queue to get in.

Fly to fabulous Miami from Birmingham Airport with four-star airline Aer Lingus with a stopover in Dublin which has a US customs clearance gate which saves lengthy queuing.

The city boasts an array of hotels, many featuring Art Deco styling

A taste of La Dolce Vita in the Italian countryside

By Victoria Pollitt

FAMOUS landmarks around the world are a remarkably hot topic of conversation between my three and six-year-old children.

This is thanks as much to the Cbeebies programme Go Jetters as educational efforts on our part. So when the Leaning Tower of Pisa comes into view, even the sweltering August Italian heat doesn't cool their excitement.

Children under eight aren't allowed up the tower and the streets are heaving so we stop just long enough to take it all in.

Alongside thousands doing the same, we get the all-important pictures next to the extraordinarily slanting building, before we grab some pizza and hot-foot it back to our hire car.

We've already managed a day in Florence, taking Josh and Jessica on a whistle-stop tour of the city before their legs got tired. The Duomo cathedral, Ponte Vecchio bridge and glorious Boboli Gardens were ticked off in a morning, before another rewarding pizza and gelato.

We'd bagged a cheap deal in an airport hotel for our first two nights to tackle the cities but now it was time to leave these bustling hotspots in search of the tranquillity of the countryside and the Dolce Vita.

Our home for the next five nights is atop a hill, very much off the beaten track. Literally. A 10-minute dusty, bumpy, beaten track. We wondered where our first foray into the world of Airbnb had taken us.

This global phenomenon lets people rent out their properties or spare rooms to guests, from small rooms, to shared houses, villas and even entire castles, across more than 65,000 cities There were hundreds of appealing options at decent prices, even at peak season and we narrowed down our search using the list of criteria, map view, photos and reviews.

We finally chose an intriguing property on a large private estate in the hidden hamlet of La Farneta in central Tuscany.

Here there are a dozen or so apartments in a classic Tuscan setting, surrounded by olive trees, scorched fields and forests as far as the eye could see. The only sound – apart from our children in the shared swimming pool – was that of crickets in the towering trees of this 230-hectare estate. The pool was the big draw here. The weather can get so hot in summer I would say you have to have one if you have children in tow.

The owner Gianfausto gave us the authentic experience Airbnb has built its success on – welcoming us to his home, giving us a guided tour and even playing his piano to provide some pleasant poolside accompaniment.

The accommodation wasn't luxurious but it was authentic and I can't remember staying anywhere as peaceful.

It may have been 15 minutes from the nearest shop or restaurant but two Tuscan treasures aren't far away. The walled towns of San Gimignano and Volterra provided entertaining excursions. Josh and Jess loved the narrow alleys and the nooks and crannies of these picturesque places while the adults could enjoy the sights and sounds of Tuscany. With every second shop seemingly selling pasta, olive oil or wild boar, food is a big part of any Tuscan trip. We found several places for a plate of pasta including Osteria Del Borgo in the pretty village of Mensano.

Staying in a remote location meant it was easier to have lunch out and dinner on our terrace with views over the rolling hills as the sun dipped below the trees. The perfect evening temperature was ideal for a family walk around the estate, roaming the land and spotting the occasional wall lizard or deer.

We knew Tuscany in August was a gamble. But we discovered it is possible to beat the heat and the crowds and enjoy complete tranquillity.

And we ticked a landmark off that rather demanding wishlist.

l Accommodation via Airbnb (www.airbnb.co.uk)

First tickets to new Bear attraction are released

Bear Grylls, the inspiration for the new attraction

THE first tickets for The Bear Grylls Adventure, which promises a range of high octane thrills based on the TV explorer's military past, have been released.

With eight action-packed challenges available, 5,000 pre-release tickets have been made available for the new NEC-based attraction in Birmingham, with prices starting from £20.

Due to open in the autumn, The Bear Grylls Adventure has been designed around real-life challenges faced by the TV explorer and is being promoted by the firm that runs Alton Towers.

A series of activities at the attraction's Basecamp are aimed at giving people the skills needed for success.

Basecamp, which is designed as the heart of the attraction, will consist of four team and individual challenges inspired by Bear's own military experiences and past adventures from across the globe.

Maze

All visitors will experience Basecamp and the other adventures already announced – indoor freefall, climbing, diving and walking the high ropes.

The Basecamp will include a maze, an assault course, target archery and escape rooms where it will be a race against time to crack codes, solve puzzles and find the way outusing logic and resourcefulness.

Additional experiences include the iFly Indoor Freefall, diving, high ropes and climbing.

It has been revealed that the diving experience will offer the chance to swim with a variety of aquatic creatures.

These include Black Tip Reef Sharks and Cownose Raysamong the fish.

Bear Grylls Adventure is the newest UK attraction to be built by Merlin, the theme park group that also owns Alton Towers.

For more information and for tickets, visit www.beargryllsadventure.com

Ministers to look at loophole of knife sales

A LOOPHOLE allowing the sale of deadly knives on the high street is to be looked into by Government ministers as a result of an investigation by The Chronicle's sister paper, the Express & Star.

Crime Minister Victoria Atkins has launched the inquiry after images of blades purchased legally in Wolverhampton, which featured in newspaper reports, were sent to her.

The blades, although similar to the banned zombie knives, can be sold because they do not feature images or words which suggest violence.

But they can be just as lethal, and purchased for under £20 from shops in the Black Country.

A petition for a review into legislation on the sale of knives has been signed by almost 6,000 people.

In a letter to West Midlands Police and Crime Commissioner David Jamieson, Ms Atkins said: "The definition of zombie knives identifies the most common characteristics of these knives and what distinguishes them from other knives and makes them particularly harmful.

"We considered the criteria needed to describe an item as a zombie knife very carefully and if we wanted to remove the third element of the definition, that the weapon includes images or words that suggest it is to be used for the purposes of violence.

"However, I am concerned by the images you have provided and I have asked my officials to consider this issue further."

Mr Jamieson, who has backed the campaign, said: "I am pleased the Home Office are taking this issue seriously and are looking closely at my proposals.

"These knives have no practical use. The only purpose they have is to injure and kill."

Teenaged team-mates in attack on rival footballer

Zoo's Carl has grounds for recognition

Head Gardener Carl Stevens celebrates 35 service at Dudley Zoo

A DUDLEY Zoo stalwart has been recognised for 35 years of service at the attraction.

Carl Stevens was just 17 when he took on the role of groundsman. Now aged 52, he worked his way up to the position of head gardener in 1994 – and has held the role since.

He met his now wife of 15 years Pat, head of primates, at work, and in July 1994 met The Queen.

Mr Stevens said: "There aren't many people who can say they are based in the grounds of an 11th century castle surrounded by endangered animals from around the world and love what they do.

"The best reward is when you can just hear a visitor saying the grounds are clean and tidy. It means a lot," he added.

Zoo bosses have commended the employee, who now leads a team of six, for his hard work and dedication to the grounds during his three decades-plus in the job.

To commemorate the milestone, the head gardener was presented gift vouchers by zoo director Derek Grove.

On the long-serving employee's achievements, Mr Grove said: "Congratulations to Carl on reaching this significant anniversary.

"He is a valued and committed member of our team and does a grand job of looking after our grounds."

TWO Sunday League footballers involved in an attack on an opposition player have been spared immediate detention.

Jahn Chohan and Morgan McKensie deliberately targeted 17-year-old Lewis Owen with just minutes to go as their team – Perrywoods United – were being beaten 5-2 by Kewford Eagles, of Kingswinford at Hadley Stadium, Smethwick, in a Sunday League clash on November 20, 2016, Wolverhampton Crown Court heard.

The victim had two teeth driven into his gum and was stamped on. He now faces operations to replace two or three of his teeth at £2,000-a-time, said Mr Charles Hamer, prosecuting.

The defendants, 17 at the time, but now both 19, claimed that each acted in over-zealous self-defence but were each convicted of violent disorder after a trial. A third defendant was acquitted.

Mistake

Mr Simon Phillips, defending Chohan, who was of previous good character, insisted: "He did not start this incident. He did not throw the first punch.

"This was a spur of the moment incident and completely out of character. He made a very huge mistake but this happened almost two years ago. He has done a lot of growing up since then."

Mr Charles Cronin, representing McKensie, also with no previous conviction, said: "There was some confusion as to what actually led to this incident starting but it was not premeditated."

Chohan from Greenhill Road, and McKensie of St Kenelms Avenue, both Halesowen were each given nine months detention at a Young Offenders Institution, suspended for 18 months, 150 hours unpaid work and £2,000 compensation order.

Warning is issued over cold callers

COUNCIL bosses have urged the public to warn the elderly and vulnerable after cold callers were spotted in Tipton. Sandwell Council Trading Standards were made aware of two males cold calling in the Attwell Road, Richards Road and Turton Road area of Princes End last week.

Public health chief, Councillor Elaine Costigan, said: "They apparently wouldn't take no for an answer, even though residents told them they were council tenants and that they didn't want or need any work doing.

"It's worth warning elderly and vulnerable friends and family members not to open the door to these people.

"Council staff will always carry identification and genuine builders will never cold call looking for work – only use trusted tradesmen and never take up offers from cold callers."

Those concerned about cold callers should call 08454 040506.

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GEOFF HILL'S GAS & ELECTRICAL SUPERSTORE SUPPLYING THE WEST MIDLANDS FOR OVER 50

Balloon pioneer Mike is up there with the best

HE pioneered the use of hot-air balloons as an advertising tool and masterminded Sir Richard Branson's various world-record attempts in a flying basket.

Now Wolverhampton-born Mike Kendrick's contribution to the industry has been recognised with his induction into the Living Legends of Aviation organisation.

He joins the likes of Apollo 11 astronaut Buzz Aldrin and film star pilot John Travolta. The 97-strong roll of honour includes entrepreneurs, innovators, industry leaders, astronauts, record breakers, pilots who have become celebrities, and celebrities who have become pilots. The group includes Harrison Ford and Tom Cruise.

The Mineseeker Foundation blimp

Mike with Per Lindstrand

Mike Kendrick is inducted into Living Legends by Tom Enders Pic: @Mirja_Geh

Change

The 72-year-old, who was brought up on a council estate in Bushbury, was nominated by Branson, a friend and former business partner, following a lifetime in the balloon and airship industry, which started in the early-1970s when he brought about a change in the law to allow advertising on aircraft.

This gave birth to the global aerial advertising market and the familiar sight of such balloons and airships now seen worldwide. In 1988, he went into partnership with Sir Richard to form the Virgin Airship and Balloon Company in Telford.

The firm quickly grew to become the world's largest aerial advertising agency, operating more than 180 aircraft in some 30 countries, with clients such as Goodyear and Budweiser.

The Wolverhampton Airport owner also introduced balloons and airships to many places that had never seen them before, including the first passenger flights over the Valley of the Kings in Egypt.

Based in Bridgnorth, he is now spearheading work with his company, Straightline Aviation, on the introduction of a revolutionary heavy-lift hybrid airship designed to transport cargo and passengers to remote parts of the world and engineered to use less fuel, emit less carbon dioxide and eliminate the need for costly ground-level infrastructure.

The company has attracted interest from the oil, gas and mining industries following its announcement that it would be buying 12 of the Lockheed Martin Hybrid Airships for £330 million. He also set up the Mineseeker Foundation, using airbuses to find and remove mines in Africa

On receiving the award, he said: "It was a true surprise. "I'm honoured and deeply humbled."

Mandy still flying high after 40 years service

Mandy Fleet, aged 62, who has celebrated 40 years with the force, with Inspector Chris Cotton at the airport

ONE of West Midlands Police's most dedicated members of staff has celebrated 40 years with the force.

Film classic Grease was only just being released when Mandy Fleet joined the police.

The 62-year-old was one of the first-ever police staff members and is still working hard as part of the team based at Birmingham Airport.

The business support officer – a keen charity fundraiser who helped raise £90,000 for worthy causes in just four years – has no job departure plans anytime soon.

She found romance near the runway after meeting husband-to-be Andy when he was a security worker at the airport. The couple now have a 19-year-old daughter.

To mark her 40th anniversary milestone Mrs Fleet, from Solihull, was treated to gifts from her co-workers.

She said: "I'm very proud to be part of the force, and it is hard to believe it is 40 years since I started at Bournville Lane Police Station.

"I have spent most of my time with the airport unit and I still enjoy it after all these years."

She initially started her career doing administration at CID, moving to the airport police unit in 1989.

Her role has evolved to helping keep bobbies out on patrol by completing important behind-the-scenes tasks.

Taxpayer to foot £300m bill to finish off hospital

THE Government is to spend more than £300 million of taxpayers' money to finish work on the stalled Midland Metropolitan Hospital at Smethwick.

By Simon Penfold

Work will get under way in the autumn and will take the final bill for the hospital to more than £500 million when it opens in 2022 – four years later than originally planned.

In the meantime urgent repairs and weather proofing work is needed at the site, which has stood idle since building company Carillion collapsed in January.

Up to £20 million will be spent over the coming months to secure the site from further weather damage before the winter, so construction work by a new contractor can start next spring.

Checked

Some areas inside are suffering from mould where water has seeped in. A handful of former Carillion workers have been kept at the site by the Sandwell & West Birmingham NHS Trust.

Rob Maiden, the former safety manager on the construction site, said all plasterboarding in the building would need to be checked for damp to ensure there was no further risk of mould.

A 29-year Carillion veteran and a member of the core team at the Midland Met site since before construction started three years ago, he admitted it had been "sad and really frustrating" to see work on the project stalled for so many months.

But there was an enthusiastic reception for the Government's decision to directly pay for work to complete the two-thirds built hospital.

The idea of a second private finance deal, similar to the one with Carillion, has been dropped and instead the money will come from the taxpayer.

But the four year delay will place added strain on the existing hospital services in the area.

Making the funding announcement, Cabinet Office Minister David Lidington said: "Our priority through this process has been to keep public services running smoothly and safely."

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Modfather set for date In the City

A year on from the 40th anniversary of The Jam's debut album, modfather Paul Weller is In the City – Birmingham that is – as he shows no signs of slowing down.

Weller, aged 60, released his 13th studio album A Kind of Revolution this year and announced a UK arena tour. He performs at The Genting Arena tomorrow (Friday) with support from Stone Foundation, whose latest album Street Rituals was produced by . . . Paul Weller.

The concert kicks off a month of big name acts to perform in the second city.

This weekend sees successful R&B vocal group Boyz II Men in action, famed for the big hit End of the Road. Catch them at the O2 Academy on Saturday, followed by Grammy-award winning Justin Timberlake at the Arena Birmingham on Bank Holiday Monday, August 27.

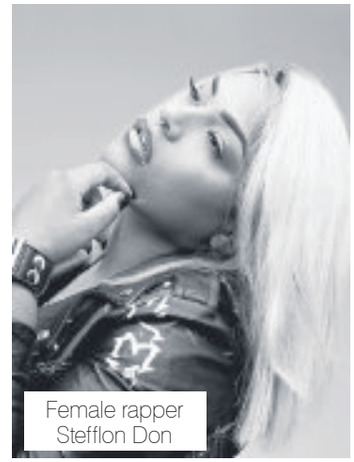
Fellow former Disney Club star Britney Spears – joined by Pitbull – performs her final UK arena tour date of her #1 Las Vegas residency show at the Genting Arena on August 31.

Here Comes the Summer Son as Scottish alternative rock band Texas, led by Sharleen Spiteri, perform at the Symphony Hall on September 1 alongside special guests Imelda May and Ward Thomas as part of The MJR Group's Skyline Series.

The iconic Barry Manilow performs on September 4 at Arena Birmingham and Passenger the following night at the O2 Institute.

Chart-topper Jason Derulo has a date at Arena Birmingham on September 26.

MADE stars Chase & Status and Rage MC


Female rapper Stefflon Don

MADE for hip-hop

Chase & Status, Giggs, Andy C, Stefflon Don and more take centre stage at MADE For The Weekend in Birmingham.

Following the successful move to Perry Park and a sold-out MADE Festival, the two-day indoor event, on October 12 and 13, will see a massive line-up of hip hop, grime and bass all under one roof at the Genting Arena.

Other confirmed acts include Gorgon City, Pusha T, Maleek Berry, Preditah, Nasty C, My Nu Leng, Dread MC and SaSaSaS.

Procedings kick off on October 12 with rapper Pusha T, president of Kanye West's GOOD Music label, who recently released new album Daytona. Grime artist Gigg, female star Stefflon Don and homegrown Birmingham talent, the DJ and producer Preditah also take the stage, along with the British-Nigerian act Maleek Berry.

Chase & Status, best remembered for their 2009 top 10 hit End Credits, are among the illustrious line-up for the Saturday, alongside Andy C, who recently sold out Wembley Arena in three days.

Gorgon City bring their bass-infused Kingdom brand to the Genting Arena in a special extended DJ set. Bristol duo My Nu Leng featuring Dread MC also join the line-up, while SaSaSaS appear hot on the heels of a stellar performance at MADE Festival 2018.

There will be a back set from Bushbaby and Sammy Virji and Resonance Records head honcho Max Chapman will fly the flag for UK talent. House producer Eli Brown completes the existing set. More top names are likely to be announced.

MADE Festival director Pete Jordan said: "After the fifth year of MADE Festival summer edition and a 12,000 sell-out at Perry Park in July, we felt it was time to take the brand to the next level.

"We wanted to bring the extravaganza of the festival into an indoor setting, and in autumn when the UK festival season is well and truly over."

Oh, What A Night ahead at theatre

Theatregoers can enjoy the sounds of Frankie Valli and the Four Seasons as the hit musical The Jersey Boys returns to Wolverhampton's Grand Theatre.

It tells the true life story of four boys from the wrong side of the tracks who wrote their own songs, invented a unique sound, and sold 175 million records worldwide.

It will feature hit after legendary hit including Beggin', Can't Take My Eyes Off You, Oh, What A Night!, Sherry, Walk Like a Man, Rag Doll, Bye Bye Baby and Big Girls Don't Cry.

The show runs at the Lichfield Street venue from August 28 to September 8 at 7.30pm each night plus 2.30pm matinees on Wednesday, Thursday and Saturday.

Meanwhile, Move It, Move It to the New Alexandra Theatre in Birmingham to join Alex the lion, Marty the zebra, Melman the giraffe, Gloria the hippo and those plotting penguins as they bound onto the stage in the Madagascar the Musical.

Based on the smash-hit animated movie, it follows the group of friends as they escape from their home in New York's Central Park Zoo and find themselves on an unexpected journey to the madcap world of King Julien's Madagascar.

It runs until September 4 and arrives in Wolverhampton next May.

Matilda runs until September 8 at the Birmingham Hippodrome, while a smash-and-grab production – The Comedy About A Bank Robbery – runs at the city's Rep until September 8. It would be criminal to miss it!

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AT YOUR LEISURE

Musician George Ezra

If it feels like Paradise you know it's George heading your way

Singer-songwriter George Ezra will be riding Shotgun into Birmingham's Genting Arena next year.

Fans of the Hertfordshire-born 25-year-old will be in Paradise as he performs on March 17 as part of a 10-date series of performances.

The announcement comes after Ezra, who topped the charts with Shotgun this summer – his first number one – headlined Boardmasters Festival in Newquay, and ahead of a sold-out UK tour that begins in November.

Ezra followed up his debut album Wanted On Voyage – the third best-selling album of the year in the UK in 2014 – with this year's offering Staying At Tamara's, which is officially the biggest-selling album so far this year. It remains in the top five of the Official Albums Chart 20 weeks after release. This year Ezra appeared the Forest Live concerts on Cannock Chase, one of three headline acts alongside Paul Heaton & Jacqui Abbott and Paloma Faith.

Ezra first rose to prominence four years ago with the release of the hit single Budapest.

He is best known for other hit singles such as Blame it on Me, Listen to the Man, Barcelona, Cassie O and Don't Matter Now.

No ordinary Joe! Comic marks 30th anniversary

Joe Pasquale burst on to our television screens 30 years ago on ITV's New Faces – and doesn't seem to have been away ever since.

A winner of I'm a Celebrity . . . Get Me Out of Here, the squeaky-voiced comic is on his 30th anniversary tour A Few Of His Favourite Things; billed as 'a celebration of his best cack, plus some surprises on the way'.

A regular in recent years at the Grand Theatre's pantomime, he returns to the Lichfield Street venue on September 12, from 6.30pm, with tickets starting at £14.

The legendary comedian Kevin Hart has been pretty busy since the last time he ended up in Birmigham with his sell-out 'What Now' tour. His memoir I Can't Make This Up: Life Lessons debuted at Number One on the New York Times Bestseller list, he voiced Captain Underpants in its first movie and appeared in the Jumanji reboot starring Jack Black and Dwayne Johnson.

He is back in the Midlands at Arena Birmingham on August 30, from 7pm, on 'The Kevin Hart Irresponsible Tour'.

The voice of Love Island, comedian Iain Stirling is also in Birmingham, appearing at the Rep on September 7, exploring dinner party etiquette, feminism and the pressures on a generation brought up in a world of instant gratification, while George Egg brings his DIY Chef show to the Old Rep on September 8 from 7.30pm.

Joe Pasquale

Mysterious play Meek to take centre stage

Penelope Skinner's mysterious new play, Meek, is being staged at Birmingham Repertory Theatre from September 4-8, following its première at the Edinburgh Festival Fringe this month.

Described as a haunting vision of ruthless state control, tense friendships and one woman's determination not to be broken, Meek is a tale which reflects on fraught times.

In a society where private lives become political and freedom of expression is not an option, Irene finds herself imprisoned but as tales of her incarceration spread she is forced to make a brutal decision.

Award-winning writer Skinner is recognised as one of the UK's leading voices in contemporary theatre. She says: "On a small scale, it is a story about friendship, faith, shame and betrayal. On a wider scale, it is about the ways in which spirituality can be co-opted for political gain, and the impact of that on our personal freedoms. It is also a play about love."

Directed by Amy Hodge, the cast includes Scarlett Brookes, Shvorne Marks and Amanda Wright.

Live bands after racing an odds-on winner

Ocean Colour Scene and Kaiser Chiefs will entertain punters at the end of a day's racing at Wolverhampton. The Dunstall Park course is putting on two nights of post-racing music, with Birmingham-based Ocean Colour Scene kicking proceedings on August 31. The band have produced five top 10 albums, including Moseley Shoals and the number one Marchin' Already in 1997. Top 40 hits include The Circle, The Day We Caught the Train and Riverboat Song.

They take to the stage after a seven-race card from 7.30pm.

The Brit award-winning Kaiser Chiefs, led by Ricky Wilson, follow the next night, which doubles as Ladies Day at the racetrack. The Leeds band's six studio albums, including the Ivor Novello and NME award-winning Employment have spawned a string of hits, among them I Predict A Riot, Oh My God, Never Miss A Beat and the number one Ruby.

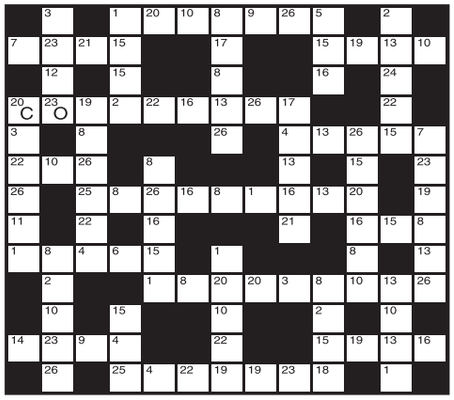
After the jockeys have weighed in for the final time on the card at 5.10pm, Kaiser Chiefs take the stage at 6.10pm.

BRAIN GYM

No.494

Codeword

Each number in the grid represents a different letter of the alphabet and every letter of the alphabet is used. Use the given letter(s) to the right of the main grid to start you off.



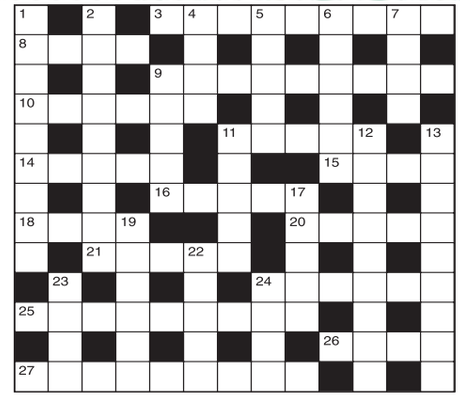
1	14
2	15
3	16
4	17
5	18
6	19
7	20 C
8	21
9	22
10	23 O
11	24
12	25
13	26

LAST WEEK'S SOLUTION:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
U	P	K	M	E	X	R	D	C	O	Z	J	H
14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
W	Y	F	A	N	G	L	B	I	T	V	S	Q

Double Crossword

Choose either quick or cryptic clues – both fit the same grid.



Cryptic Clues:

Across

3. Medical containers houses (4-5)
8. Kind of stone for citrus fruit (4)
9. They make rings round ships' equipment (9)
10. There's no part for the benefactor (6)
11. See 23 Down
14. Dress up for a start to the day, we hear (5)
15. Collapse – minor operation after the doctor is seen (4)
16. Negotiate for something that gives particular pleasure (5)
18. Bird put in the crate alone (4)
20. Eastern potentate elected repeatedly (5)
21 & 12Dn. Moralists at the neighbouring hostelry? (5,9)
24. Shrubby plant needed before the Spanish produce a quantity of grain (6)
25. Warships to check credentials in escort arrangement (9)
26. See 24 Down
27. An assortment of roofs here on the edge of the sea (9)

Down

1. Help set an arrangement for trumpeters (9)
2. Mix me a lotion likely to excite sensitivity (9)
4. Club used for evening out (4)
5. Part of a flap elongated on a coat (5)
6. Used to being deposed? (6)
7. Late afternoon function unfinished (4)
9. Nobleman to be of some importance (5)
11. Missile associated with the sea (5)
12. See 21 Across
13. Weak, lacking prickles (9)
17. A gust will disturb the river (5)
19. Art Gallery window (6)
22. Wait cheerfully to find a letter within (5)
23 & 11Ac. What to do after retiring (2,2,5)
24 & 26Ac. Carry weapons with sleeves rolled up, one hears (4,4)

Quick Clues:

Across

3. Extempore (9)
8. Pool (4)
9. Begin (9)
10. Excuse (6)
11. Guide (5)
14. Young eel (5)
15. Daybreak (4)
16. Distant (5)
18. Afresh (4)
20. Arouse (5)
21. Ire (5)
24. Conquered (6)
25. Competitor (9)
26. Grass (4)
27. Dining-room (9)

Down

1. Transient (9)
2. Consultation (9)
4. Market (4)
5. Correct (5)
6. Heeded (6)
7. Carry (4)
9. Musical drama (5)
11. Laziness (5)
12. Storyteller (9)
13. Compensate (9)
17. Less (5)
19. Squirm (6)
22. Dogma (5)
23. Prod (4)
24. Endure (4)

Sudoku

	9		2			3		7
		8		3				6
6		7	5			8		
7				9		6		
	1		3		2		7	4
9		4		7				5
		2			9	5		8
5				2		4		
		9			4		2	

Fill in the grid above so that every column, every row and each of the 3x3 boxes contains all the digits from 1 to 9.

LAST WEEK'S SOLUTIONS >

7	3	8	1	6	9	4	5	2
2	4	5	8	3	7	6	1	9
1	6	9	2	5	4	8	7	3
8	2	1	7	4	5	3	9	6
4	5	3	9	1	6	2	8	7
9	7	6	3	8	2	1	4	5
5	1	7	4	2	3	9	6	8
3	9	4	6	7	8	5	2	1
6	8	2	5	9	1	7	3	4

LAST WEEK'S CROSSWORD SOLUTIONS:
CRYPTIC - Across: 1 Hymn; 3 Sergeant; 8 Gala; 9 Priority; 11 Air sea rescue; 13 Amazon; 14 Arrays; 17 Fit as a fiddle; 20 Ungainly; 21 Unit; 22 Detonate; 23 Hand.
Down: 1 Hogmanay; 2 Malaria; 4 Errors; 5 Goods-train; 6 Adieu; 7 Toys; 10 Decoration; 12 Asserted; 15 Addenda; 16 Tablet; 18 Ingot; 19 Quid. QUICK - Across: 1 So-so; 3 Manifest; 8 Role; 9 Converse; 11 Idiosyncrasy; 13 Hermit; 14 Danger; 17 Faithfulness; 20 Pedantic; 21 Stun; 22 Depleted; 23 Type. Down: 1 Straight; 2 Soldier; 4 Amount; 5 Invariable; 6 Earns; 7 Tier; 10 Assistance; 12 Presence; 15 Greatly; 16 Office; 18 Add up; 19 Sped.

Quiz

1. Whose novel Madame Bovary was published in 1857?
2. Which anaesthetic was discovered by Justus, Baron Von Liebig?
3. In which country was the Great Trek of 1836-37 made?
4. Of what is the Ivy League an eight-member group?
5. Which shrub has common and hedge varieties?
6. What do we call the mammal Oryctolagus cuniculus?
7. Which composer's most famous piece is Carnival of the Animals?
8. Who made up the Marx Brothers cinematic comedy team along with Groucho, Chico and Zeppo?
9. Of which tree is the ironbark a species?
10. Which best-selling British author and naturalist died in January 1995?

Last week's solutions:

Quiz: 1 Val Kilmer; 2 The Balkan Peninsula; 3 Jeremy Bentham; 4 Vulture; 5 The Stars and Stripes; 6 French; 7 Gases; 8 Odin; 9 Harpers and Queen; 10 Selhurst Park.

Niner: MANSFIELD

Niner

Each number from 1 to 9 represents a different letter. Solve the clues and insert the letters in the appropriate squares to discover a word which uses all nine letters.

6452 gives a South American animal,
28352356 gives a Latin American animal,
9762115 gives an African animal.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9

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SATURDAY'S TV AUGUST 25

CHOICE

Katie Derham

Proms Extra (BBC2, 6.50pm)
The programme moves into the Royal Albert Hall for one night as an expectant audience gathers to hear Bernstein's On the Town. Katie Derham and guests discuss Mozart's Clarinet Concerto, Liszt's Hungarian Rhapsodies and a world premiere by singer-songwriter Laura Mvula. David Owen Norris offers another Chord of the Week and there is a performance by Chineke!

BBC1

6.00 Breakfast. **10.00** Saturday Kitchen Live. **11.30** Nadiya's Family Favourites. (R) **12.00** Football Focus. **1.00** BBC News; Weather. **1.15** Bargain Hunt. (R) **2.00** Live Challenge Cup Rugby League. Catalans Dragons v Warrington Wolves (Kick-off 3.00pm). **5.30 Film:** Shrek Forever After. (2010)

6.55 BBC News.

7.05 Regional Programme.

7.15 Impossible Celebrities. Dick and Dom are among the 18 celebrities playing for charity in the quiz. Rick Edwards hosts.

8.05 Pointless Celebrities. Alexander Armstrong and Richard Osman challenge more famous faces to take part in the unorthodox quiz show. This time, all the contestants are veterans of various TV talent shows or reality contests. MasterChef 2015 winner Simon Wood teams up with his 2016 successor Jane Devonshire, while Lee McQueen, who won the fourth series of The Apprentice, joins forces with Yasmina Siadatan, the ambitious businesswoman who followed him in 2009. Plus, X Factor 2013 champion Sam Bailey throws her lot in with Pop Idol series two star Michelle McManus, and Britain's Got Talent-winning street dancer George Sampson bands together with singer and one-time Celebrity Big Brother star Jermaine Jackson. (R)

8.50 Casualty. Wanting to keep busy, Alicia arrives back at work in the ED earlier than expected, and Connie gives her the job of medical lead for the day. OAPs Joseph and Reggie decide to sneak out of their care home and make their way to a diner looking forward to a full English breakfast, but just as they arrive, Reggie collapses and an ambulance is called. Louise is ready to give Dylan a piece of her mind about bringing on a CQC investigation, until she learns that he is going to clean out Sam's locker later on.

9.40 Mrs Brown's Boys. Agnes turns to the internet to find a date for Valentine's Day. (R)

10.10 BBC News; Weather.; National Lottery Update.

10.30 Match of the Day.

11.50 Film: Reasonable Doubt. (2014)

1.10 Weather for the Week Ahead. **1.15** BBC News.

BBC2

6.40 Top Class. (R) **7.10** Marrying Mum and Dad. (R) **7.40** Officially Amazing Goes Bunkers. (R) **8.10** The Dengineers. (R) **8.35** Deadly Dinosaurs with Steve Backshall. (R) **9.05** David Attenborough's Natural Curiosities. (R) **9.30** Nature's Miracle Babies. (R) **10.30** Killer Whales: Beneath the Surface – Natural World. (R) **11.15** Rugby League's Legendary Watersplash Final. (R) **12.00** Nigel Slater: Eating Together. (R) **12.30** Great British Menu. (R) **1.00** Great British Menu. (R) **1.30** Garden Rescue. (R) **2.15** Escape to the Country. (R) **3.00** Scrappers. (R) **3.30** Saving Lives at Sea. (R) **4.30** Final Score. **5.15** Flog It! (R) **5.50** A Passage to Britain. (R)

6.50 Proms Extra. The programme moves into the Royal Albert Hall for one night as an expectant audience gathers to hear Bernstein's On the Town. Presented by Katie Derham.

7.30 Dad's Army. The platoon plans to re-enact the battle between St George and the dragon as part of the Wings for Victory fundraising effort – unaware the ARP wardens have the same idea. (R)

8.00 Blitz: The Bombs That Changed Britain. The deadly impact of an incendiary bomb that set fire to St Peter's Church in the historic heart of Bristol on the night of Sunday November 24, 1940. Last in the series. (R)

9.00 QI XL. Sandi Toksvig invites Jason Manford, Sara Pascoe, Jeremy Clarkson and Alan Davies to answer questions on the subject of 'noble rot' in an extended edition of the panel show. (R)

9.50 Anita & Me – and Me. Meera Syal journeys back to Essington in the Black Country, the mining village where she grew up, describing how her childhood inspired her coming-of-age novel Anita and Me. The film Anita & Me follows.

9.55 Film: Anita & Me. (2002) Two girls from different ethnic backgrounds strike up an unlikely friendship during the 1970s. Comedy drama based on Meera Syal's novel, starring Chandeep Uppal and Anna Brewster.

11.25 Film: Zindagi Na Milegi Dobara. (2011) A groom-to-be takes his two friends on a road trip to Spain, participating in extreme sports along the way. Comedy, starring Abhay Deol, Hrithik Roshan and Farhan Akhtar.

1.50 This Is BBC Two.

ITV

6.00 CITV: Sooty. **6.10** Make It Pop. (R) **6.35** Dino Dana. (R) **6.50** Om Nom Stories. **6.55** The Oddbods Show. (R) **7.05** NinjaGo: Decoded. (R) **7.15** NinjaGo: Decoded. (R) **7.30** ToonMarty. (R) **7.40** ToonMarty. (R) **7.55** Drop Dead Weird. **8.25** ITV News. **8.30** Zoe Ball on Saturday. **9.25** James Martin's Saturday Morning. (R) **11.20** James Martin's American Adventure. (R) **11.50** £10k Holiday Home. (R) **12.20** Love Your Garden. (R) **1.20** ITV News; Weather. **1.30** ITV Racing Live: York Ebor Festival. The fourth and final day of the festival. **4.00** The Chase. (R) **5.00** WOS Wrestling.

6.00 ITV News; Weather.

6.15 Regional Programme; Weather.

6.30 Japandemonium. A final helping of the strangest Japanese TV, showcasing some of the maddest and funniest moments ever broadcast. This edition features the game of Candy or not Candy – where contestants bite objects to find out – chopsticks bungee jumping, and extreme pans being dropped on the head. Narrated by Melvin Odoom. Last in the series.

7.00 Big Star's Little Star. Stephen Mulhern hosts the entertainment show in which children spill the beans about famous relatives James Cracknell, Karen Blick and Vernie Bennett, talking about their home lives, making heart-warming revelations or telling downright embarrassing stories. The contestants are all hoping to win as much money as possible for their chosen charities.

8.00 Film: The Lord of the Rings: The Return of the King. (2003) As hobbits Frodo and Sam near the end of their journey into the dark lands of Mordor to destroy the One Ring, the evil Sauron unleashes the full might of his armies on Middle-earth. Meanwhile, Aragorn must fulfil his destiny of becoming king by leading his people into a climactic battle with the forces of darkness. Conclusion of the fantasy adventure trilogy, starring Elijah Wood, Viggo Mortensen, Ian McKellen and Sean Astin.

11.45 ITV News; Weather.

12.05 WOS Wrestling. (R) **1.00** Jackpot247. Interactive gaming. **3.00** Eternal Glory. (R) **3.50** ITV Nightscreen. Text-based information service.

CHANNEL 4

6.15 Triathlon: Long Course Weekend. **7.10** Mobil 1: The Grid. **7.35** Frasier. (R) **8.00** Frasier. (R) **8.30** Frasier. (R) **9.00** The Big Bang Theory. (R) **9.30** The Big Bang Theory. (R) **9.55** The Simpsons. (R) **10.25** The Simpsons. (R) **10.55** Formula 1 Belgian Grand Prix Practice 3 Live. Coverage of the third practice session at Circuit de Spa-Francorchamps. **12.25** F1 Meets Nigel Mansell. (R) **12.55** Formula 1 Belgian Grand Prix Qualifying Live. Coverage of the qualifying session at Circuit de Spa-Francorchamps (Start-time 2.00pm). **3.45** Car SOS. (R) **4.45** A Place in the Sun: Winter Sun. (R) **5.15** The People's Vet.

6.10 Escape to the Chateau: DIY. As Jonathan and Michael prepare their chateau for the big wedding, they have a sewage problem that threatens to take the whole first floor out of action. (R)

7.05 Channel 4 News.

7.35 Film: Captain America: The First Avenger. (2011) A puny but brave volunteer is rejected for military service during the Second World War. He becomes the test subject for an experiment that transforms him into the ultimate soldier, and battles against a secret Nazi society plotting to harness the powers of a mystical artefact. Superhero adventure, with Chris Evans, Hugo Weaving, Hayley Atwell and Tommy Lee Jones.

10.00 Film: Pain & Gain. (2013) Premiere. Three bodybuilders make a disastrous attempt to kidnap a businessman and get him to sign over his fortune. Fact-based action comedy, with Mark Wahlberg and Dwayne Johnson.

12.30 Film: Regression. (2015) A detective finds evidence of a satanic cult when investigating a case in which a man admits to sexually abusing his teenage daughter. Thriller, starring Ethan Hawke. **2.20** Hollyoaks. Omnibus. Simone arrives at Price Slice to find it has been broken into, Darren and Mandy's affair continues as they end up kissing, and Dennis and Liberty decide Milo should leave. (R) **4.30** Village of the Year with Penelope Keith. On the Devon coast, Penelope learns about Beer's historic fishing fleet, while Alex Langlands goes native in the Welsh village of Llanllyfni. (R) **5.25** The Posh Frock Shop. A former prima ballerina seeks a dress for a VIP event. (R) **5.50** Kirstie's Fill Your House for Free. Kirstie Allsopp creates a kitchen-diner makeover. (R)

CHANNEL 5

6.00 Milkshake! **9.50** Peppa Pig. (R) **9.55** Peppa Pig. (R) **10.00** Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles. (R) **10.30** Access. **10.40** Cats Make You Laugh Out Loud 4. (R) **11.05** Police Interceptors. (R) **12.05** Police Interceptors. (R) **1.10** Police Interceptors. (R) **2.10** Nightmare Tenants, Slum Landlords. (R) **3.10** Nightmare Tenants, Slum Landlords. (R) **4.10** Rich House, Poor House. (R) **5.10** 5 News Weekend. **5.15** Can't Pay? We'll Take It Away! (R)

6.10 Can't Pay? We'll Take It Away! In South East London, officers Gary and Cona chase a debt of nearly £50,000 in unpaid rent, leading to a feisty confrontation with the debtor. Elsewhere, agents Gary and Paul try to recover over £2,000 owed by a teenager to a local garage in Kent, and officers Max and Paul head to South West London on the trail of a film producer who owes £8,000 to financial advisers. (R)

7.05 Can't Pay? We'll Take It Away! Mike Allonby and Terry Jones repossess debtors' cars in Cheshire and Liverpool, while Paul Bohill and Steve Pinner evict a couple with young children a few days before Christmas. (R)

8.00 Before They Were Stars. A trek back through the TV archive to uncover embarrassing early brushes with fame endured by some of today's biggest stars. Among those skewered are pop stars, rock legends, silver-screen icons, celebrated comedians and sporting heroes.

9.00 Gino's Win Your Wish List. Gino D'Acampo hosts the game show in which a family of five contestants choose their dream prizes, then in pairs answer questions to try to bank the items on their wish list. In the final round, two players try to secure all the prizes they have won so far – as well as a family holiday.

10.00 Celebrity Big Brother. Highlights of the housemates' past 24 hours under the all-seeing eye of Big Brother, as they try to get used to living alongside one another.

11.05 Best of Bad TV: Live & Dangerous. A collection of the biggest TV howlers caught on film, including a fire on the Blue Peter set, famous folk who think they can sing, wardrobe malfunctions and disastrous award shows. (R)

12.00 SuperCasino. **3.10** The Last Hours of Jimi Hendrix. (R)

DIGITAL

BBC Four

7.00 Elsa the Lioness **7.30** BBC Proms 2018 **9.50** West Side Stories – The Making of a Classic **10.50** Leonard Bernstein at the BBC **11.50** Top of the Pops: 1986 **12.20** Heavy Metal Britannia **1.50** Goth at the BBC **2.50** West Side Stories – The Making of a Classic **3.50** Close

ITV2

12.00 Catchphrase **12.40** You've Been Framed! Gold **1.40 Film:** The Flintstones (1994) **2.50** FYI Daily **2.55 Film:** The Flintstones (1994) **3.30 Film:** Spy Kids (2001) **4.30** FYI Daily **4.35 Film:** Spy Kids (2001) **5.25 Film:** Star Wars: Episode V – The Empire Strikes Back (1980) **6.25** FYI Daily **6.30 Film:** Star Wars: Episode V – The Empire Strikes Back (1980) **8.00 Film:** The Mask (1994) **9.00** FYI Daily **9.05 Film:** The Mask (1994) **10.05** Family Guy **11.05** American Dad! **11.55** The Cleveland Show **12.55 Film:** Hercules (2014) **1.55** FYI Daily **2.00 Film:** Hercules (2014) **2.45** Totally Bonkers Guinness World Records **2.55** Teleshopping **5.55** ITV2 Nightscreen

ITV3

3.05 Film: Carry On Cruising (1962) **4.55** A Touch of Frost **7.00** Midsomer Murders **9.00** Endeavour **11.00** Vera **1.00** On the Buses **2.00** ITV3 Nightscreen **2.30** Teleshopping

ITV4

2.05 Storage Wars **3.05 Film:** Cahill, US Marshal (1973) **4.05** FYI Daily **4.10 Film:** Cahill, US Marshal (1973) **5.10 Film:** The Sting (1973) **6.10** FYI Daily **6.15 Film:** The Sting (1973) **7.45 Film:** Cannonball Run II (1984) **8.45** FYI Daily **8.50 Film:** Cannonball Run II (1984) **10.00** Cycling: Vuelta a Espana **11.00 Film:** Jaws (1975) **12.05** FYI Daily **12.10 Film:** Jaws (1975) **1.30** Better Late Than Never **2.30** World Cup Rivalries: Brazil v Italy **2.45** ITV4 Nightscreen **3.00** Teleshopping

E4

11.00 Brooklyn Nine-Nine **12.00 Film:** Volcano (1997) **2.05** Rude(ish) Tube Shorts **2.15** The Big Bang Theory **6.45 Film:** Super 8 (2011) **9.00 Film:** Prometheus (2012) **11.25** Gogglebox **1.35** Tattoo Fixers **2.40** Rude Tube: Love Bytes **3.35** Gogglebox **4.25** Rude(ish) Tube **5.10** How I Met Your Mother

Film4

11.00 Carry On Cabby (1963) **12.50** Robots (2005) **2.30** Night at the Museum (2006) **4.45** Cheaper By the Dozen 2 (2005) **6.40** About Time (2013) **9.00** Sicario (2015) **11.20** Bone Tomahawk (2015) **1.55** The Man with the Iron Fists (2012) **3.50** Close

SUNDAY'S TV AUGUST 26

CHOICE

Keeley Hawes

Bodyguard (BBC1, 9pm)
New series. A specialist protection officer is assigned to guard an ambitious home secretary who may be the target of a terror plot following her support of a controversial new surveillance bill. The bodyguard's experiences in the army have left him harbouring deep-seated resentments - which may make him a threat to the politician he is supposed to protect. Thriller, with Richard Madden, Keeley Hawes, Sophie Rundle, Pippa Haywood, Paul Ready, Nicholas Gleaves, Tom Brooke and Vincent Franklin.

BBC1

6.00 Breakfast. **9.00** Match of the Day. (R) **10.25** Sunday Morning Live. **11.25** Homes Under the Hammer. (R) **12.00** Bargain Hunt. (R) **1.00** BBC News; Weather. **1.15** Still Open All Hours. (R) **1.45** Hold the Sunset. (R) **2.15** Money for Nothing. (R) **3.00** Escape to the Country. (R) **3.30** Songs of Praise. **4.05** Fake or Fortune? (R) **5.05** Eat Well for Less? (R)

6.05 The Deer Stalker: Our Lives. Documentary following a man who stalks red deer in the hills near Fort William as he passes on his skills to his 15-year-old son during one of Scotland's worst winters.

6.35 BBC News.

6.50 Regional Programme.

7.00 Countryfile. Matt Baker and Margherita Taylor present the show from North Wales, discovering how miniature antennas attached to bees have revealed new information about the insects' lives. Plus, Margherita joins dementia patients and their carers in a trip on the Blaenau Ffestiniog railway, Adam Henson investigates new developments in cattle farming, and John Craven is joined by judges Cerys Matthews and Simon King to announce the final 12 in this year's photographic competition.

8.00 Fake or Fortune? Fiona Bruce and Philip Mould investigate a small watercolour sketch found in a hoard of artwork stolen by the Nazis, that could be the work of sculptor Henry Moore.

9.00 Bodyguard. New series. A specialist protection officer is assigned to guard an ambitious home secretary who may be the target of a terror plot. Thriller, with Keeley Hawes and Richard Madden.

10.00 BBC News.

10.20 Regional Programme.

10.30 Match of the Day 2. Mark Chapman reviews the day's Premier League action, introducing highlights of Watford v Crystal Palace and Newcastle United v Chelsea.

11.30 Supermarket Shopping Secrets. A look at how the retailers compete in the market for healthier foods. (R)

12.30 Weather for the Week Ahead.
12.35 BBC News.

BBC2

6.30 Around the World in 80 Gardens. (R) **7.30** Gardeners' World. (R) **8.30** Countryfile Live. (R) **9.30** The Beechgrove Garden. (R) **10.00** Saturday Kitchen Best Bites. **11.30** Great British Menu. (R) **12.00** Great British Menu. (R) **12.30** Great British Menu. (R) **1.00** Hairy Bikers' Best of British. (R) **1.45** Triathlon World Series: Montreal Women's Race. **3.15** Wastemen. (R) **4.10** Saving Lives at Sea. (R) **5.10** Tribes, Predators & Me. (R)

6.10 Film: Raiders of the Lost Ark. (1981) Intrepid archaeologist Indiana Jones goes in search of the legendary Ark of the Covenant, a biblical artefact of devastating power. His quest leads him to Egypt, where the Nazis are plotting to use the Ark to further Hitler's plans for world domination – aided by Jones's deceitful French rival. Steven Spielberg's action adventure, with Harrison Ford, Karen Allen, Paul Freeman and John Rhys-Davies.

8.00 Dragons' Den. The panel of entrepreneurs assess the profit-making potential of a range of fishing bait, a pasta home delivery service, and a scheme to make money out of rubbish. With Evan Davis.

9.00 Eight Go Rallying: The Road to Saigon. The teams head for the Cambodian border, despite serious problems with two of the cars, and head for Angkor Wat, the mysterious centrepiece of the ancient Khmer empire.

10.00 Romesh Ranganathan: Irrational Live. The comedian's first-ever live stand-up show, in which the Bafta-nominated star takes shots at everyone from his children to a stranger in a coffee shop. (R)

11.00 Man Like Mobeen. Eight learns that his father is dying. When Mobeen agrees to visit him one last time, he is unprepared for the terrible secret he learns and the favour the old man has to ask. (R)

11.20 Man Like Mobeen. An anti-Islam march comes through the neighbourhood, and Mobeen ends up sharing a police van with the leader when he takes the blame for Aks' counter-protest. Last in the series. (R)

11.45 Pump Up the Bhangra: The Sound of Asian Britain. (R)

12.45 Sign Zone: Countryfile Live. (R)
1.40 Holby City. (R) **2.40** This Is BBC Two.

ITV

6.00 CITV: Sooty. **6.10** Make It Pop. (R) **6.35** Dino Dana. (R) **6.50** Om Nom Stories. **6.55** The Oddbods Show. (R) **7.05** NinjaGo: Decoded. (R) **7.15** NinjaGo: Decoded. (R) **7.30** ToonMarty. (R) **7.40** ToonMarty. (R) **7.55** Drop Dead Weird. **8.25** ITV News. **8.30** Zoe Ball on Sunday. **9.25** Japandemonium. (R) **9.55** Cannonball. (R) **10.55** Ninja Warrior UK. (R) **12.00** WOS Wrestling. (R) **1.00** ITV News; Weather. **1.15** Big Star's Little Star. (R) **2.15** Catchphrase. (R) **3.00** Tenable. (R) **4.00** Tipping Point: Lucky Stars. (R) **5.00** The Chase. (R)

6.00 ITV News; Weather.

6.15 Regional Programme; Weather.

6.30 Paul O'Grady's Little Heroes. Paul meets 11-year-old Fazeel, who was born with a genetic condition that causes his skin to blister at the slightest touch. Elsewhere, Paul also meets 10-year-old Aleksandra, as she undergoes pioneering craniofacial surgery to repair her cheekbone that has been damaged by cancer, and four-year-old Taheem, who needs a kidney transplant. (R)

7.00 The Chase: The Bloopers. Bradley Walsh presents a compilation of outtakes and laughs from the quiz show, featuring regular chasers the Governess, the Beast, the Vixen, the Sinnerman and the Dark Destroyer. (R)

8.00 Film: Jurassic World. (2015) Decades on from its first creation, Jurassic Park is now a fully operational attraction filled with genetically engineered dinosaurs. In need of a new attraction, the company behind the park creates an entirely new species – but it quickly escapes to terrorise the tourists. Action adventure sequel, starring Chris Pratt and Bryce Dallas Howard.

10.20 ITV News; Weather.

10.35 Larry Grayson: Shut That Door! Documentary exploring the entertainer's rise from poverty to fame, drawing on extracts from an unfinished autobiography that has only recently been discovered. (R)

12.20 Jackpot247. Interactive gaming.
3.00 Motorsport UK. Highlights from Snetterton. (R) **3.50** British Superbike Championship Highlights. Greg Haines presents action from round eight at Cadwell Park. (R) **4.40** ITV Nightscreen.
5.05 The Jeremy Kyle Show. Guests air their differences. (R)

CHANNEL 4

6.05 Kirstie's Fill Your House for Free. (R) **6.10** Motorsport: Volkswagen Racing Cup32. **6.35** Motorsport: British Rally Championship. **7.05** Everybody Loves Raymond. (R) **7.30** Everybody Loves Raymond. (R) **8.00** Everybody Loves Raymond. (R) **8.30** Para Swimming: European Championships. **9.30** Sunday Brunch. **12.30** Peng Life. (R) **1.00** Formula 1 Belgian Grand Prix Live Build Up. Steve Jones presents a preview of the 13th round of the season. **1.40** Formula 1 Belgian Grand Prix Live. Coverage of the 13th round of the season (Start-time 2.00pm). **4.30** Formula 1 Belgian Grand Prix Live Reaction. Reaction to the 13th round of the season. **5.35** Car SOS. (R)

6.30 Channel 4 News.

7.00 Flying Across Britain with Arthur Williams. Arthur's final journey takes him across the east coast, visiting a series of airfields that played a vital role in the Second World War. He gets a look at the US Air Force's F15 fighter, visits the world's oldest and grandest air academy and gets the chance to take a flight with the only aerobatic team in existence that is licensed to take passengers. Last in the series.

8.00 Hidden Britain by Drone. Tony Robinson sends camera drones to shoot more aerial footage of areas of Britain that are off limits to the public, including a nuclear decommissioning site that is still in active use and has appropriately tight security. Plus, cameras catch footage of bats up close and reveal the truth behind crop circles. Last in the series.

9.00 Film: World War Z. (2013) Premiere. A virus sweeps across the globe, turning everyone infected into mindless, ravening zombies. As entire countries fall into chaos, a United Nations investigator sets off on a journey around the world to discover the cause of the pandemic and hopefully find a cure before human civilisation is brought to an end. Thriller based on the novel by Max Brooks, starring Brad Pitt.

11.15 Film: 47 Ronin. (2013) A former slave leads a band of samurai as they battle monstrous and magical enemies in a quest for redemption. Fantasy adventure, with Keanu Reeves and Hiroyuki Sanada.

1.30 The Crystal Maze. (R) **2.25** Mobil 1: The Grid. (R) **2.50** Phil Spencer: Secret Agent. (R) **3.45** French Collection. (R)

CHANNEL 5

6.00 Milkshake!: Little Princess. **6.10** Wissper. (R) **6.20** Poppy Cat. (R) **6.30** Milkshake! Monkey. (R) **6.35** The Secret Life of Puppies. (R) **6.40** Seaside Antics. (R) **6.45** Olly the Little White Van. (R) **6.50** Simon. (R) **7.00** Peppa Pig. (R) **7.05** Paw Patrol. (R) **7.15** Thomas & Friends: Thrills and Spills. (R) **7.30** Fireman Sam. (R) **7.45** Rusty Rivets. **8.00** Paw Patrol. (R) **8.15** Pirata & Capitano. **8.30** Noddy: Toyland Detective. (R) **8.50** Floogals. (R) **9.00** Ben and Holly's Little Kingdom. (R) **9.15** Shimmer and Shine. (R) **9.30** Digby Dragon. (R) **9.50** Peppa Pig. (R) **9.55** Peppa Pig. (R) **10.00** Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles. (R) **10.35** Dogs Make You Laugh Out Loud. (R) **10.55** Police Interceptors. (R) **11.45** Police Interceptors. (R) **12.40** Police Interceptors. (R) **1.40 Film:** The Prince of Egypt. (1998) Animated Biblical musical, with the voice of Val Kilmer. **2.40** Access. **2.45 Film:** The Prince of Egypt. (1998) Concluded. **3.50 Film:** Pirates of the Caribbean: At World's End. (2007) Fantasy adventure sequel, starring Johnny Depp. **4.50** 5 News Update. **4.55 Film:** Pirates of the Caribbean: At World's End. (2007) Concluded.

7.00 Worst Celebrity Pop Songs Ever. A countdown of the 40 most memorable musical efforts by celebrities who have decided to diversify into music. The programme features performances by Mr T, Katie Price, Vinnie Jones, Sam Fox, Eddie "The Eagle" Edwards, David Hasselhoff, an assortment of soap stars and Christopher Lee, who embarked on a second career as a heavy-metal singer in his '80s. (R)

8.55 5 News Weekend.

9.00 Celebrity Big Brother. The ups and downs of life in the BB house as friendships and alliances are made, battle lines are drawn and arguments erupt.

10.00 Film: The Bodyguard. (1992) A former secret service agent acts as a bodyguard for a famous singer who is being persecuted by an obsessed fan. Romantic thriller, starring Kevin Costner and Whitney Houston.

11.00 Access.

11.05 Film: The Bodyguard. (1992) Concluded.

12.35 Film: Whitney Houston: A Tragic Love. (2015) **2.10** SuperCasino. **3.10** Frozen: Cryonics. (R) **4.00** My Mum's Hotter Than Me! (R)

DIGITAL

BBC Four
7.00 Simon Rattle: The Making of a Maestro **8.00** BBC Proms 2018 **10.00** Arena **11.00** Chuck Berry in Concert **12.00** Sings Stevie Wonder **1.00** Sex, Chips and Poetry: 50 Years of The Mersey Sound **2.00** The Secret Life of Landfill: A Rubbish History **3.30** Close

ITV2
12.35 Ninja Warrior UK **1.35** You've Been Framed! Gold **2.40 Film:** The Smurfs 2 (2013) **3.40** FYI Daily **3.45 Film:** The Smurfs 2 (2013) **4.45 Film:** Star Wars: Episode VI – Return of the Jedi (1983) **5.50** FYI Daily **5.55 Film:** Star Wars: Episode VI – Return of the Jedi (1983) **7.30 Film:** Rock of Ages (2012) **10.00** Family Guy **11.25** American Dad! **12.25** The Cleveland Show **12.50** Ghosted **1.20** Totally Bonkers Guinness World Records: Bonkingly Big Hits **2.10** Totally Bonkers Guinness World Records **2.20** Teleshopping **5.50** ITV2 Nightscreen

ITV3
5.00 Lewis **7.00** Agatha Christie's Marple **9.00** Midsomer Murders **11.00** Wire in the Blood **12.35** Princess Diana: A Life After Death **1.35** A Touch of Frost **3.20** Road to Avonlea **5.05** Judge Judy **5.25** ITV3 Nightscreen

ITV4
11.00 Live British Touring Car Championship. Round eight. **6.15** Barcelona's European Glory **6.30** Pawn Stars **7.00** Cycling: Vuelta a Espana **8.00** River Monsters **9.00 Film:** The Specialist (1994) **10.05** FYI Daily **10.10 Film:** The Specialist (1994) **11.15 Film:** Cannonball Run II (1984) **12.15** FYI Daily **12.20 Film:** Cannonball Run II (1984) **1.30** Minder **2.30** Football's Greatest: Johan Cruyff **2.45** ITV4 Nightscreen **3.00** Teleshopping

E4
12.15 Rude(ish) Tube Shorts **12.30** The Goldbergs **2.00** Young Sheldon **3.00** The Big Bang Theory **6.35 Film:** The Day After Tomorrow (2004) **9.00** Krypton **10.00** Fear the Walking Dead **11.00** Gogglebox **12.10** The Big Bang Theory **1.05** Krypton **2.05** Fear the Walking Dead **3.00** Rude Tube **3.25** Hollyoaks

Film4
11.00 Shark Tale (2004) **12.55** Small Soldiers (1998) **3.15** Johnny English (2003) **5.10** Titanic (1997) **9.00** Fantastic Four (2015) Four scientists return from another dimension granted unusual powers, which they use to defend the Earth. Superhero adventure, starring Miles Teller. **10.55** Iron Man 2 (2010) **1.20** Yakuza Apocalypse (2015) **3.40** Close

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It has a 24ft reception hall, a full width 18ft lounge with a dining area, a spacious separate kitchen with appliances, two double bedrooms, a master with an en-suite and a main bathroom. Add to this electric heating, double glazing, allocated parking and grounds.

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Nexo makes us wish future was here

By Tom Wiltshire

There's a certain deadlock between car manufacturers and governments at the moment regarding the supposed fuel of the future, hydrogen.

While plenty of manufacturers are poised to release fuel-cell vehicles, they're reluctant to do so with no real refuelling infrastructure in place – and governments are unlikely to invest in hydrogen stations with so few cars around to use them. It's fallen to Hyundai to plough forward with the Nexo – the successor to its ix35 Fuel Cell and soon to be the Toyota Mirai's only hydrogen-powered rival in the UK.

The Nexo is all new, from its futuristic powertrain to the concept car-esque styling. While the ix35 Fuel Cell was based on the existing ix35 SUV, the Nexo is its own model.

Hyundai aims to sell a few thousand Nexos a year in markets across the world, hopefully spurring on the development of a hydrogen infrastructure and providing a long-distance, quick-refuelling alternative to pure-electric vehicles.

It debuts some key new tech for Hyundai, including a new 12.3-inch infotainment display, driver-assistance features such as a blind-spot view monitor and lane-follow assist.

Under the hood sits a hydrogen fuel cell stack, which takes its juice from three hydrogen tanks mounted fore and aft of the rear axle. There's an electric motor and small battery pack too, but for most of the time the car is driven by the fuel cell. There are a number of benefits to this. First of all there's refuelling, which takes just a few minutes compared with the several hours you'll wait for an electric car to charge. A full-tanked Nexo is capable of a theoretical 497 miles, too – more than any EV currently available. The only emission from the Nexo is water, and particulate filters mean the car purifies the air around it as it drives.

Refuelling takes just a few minutes

The Nexo's peak output is 161bhp, delivered in the typical electric car way. That is to say, it's torquey, quick and smooth off the line, but power soon tails off and the Nexo isn't the most responsive car on the motorway.

The Nexo is a heavy car and that weight is noticeable in the corners, where it isn't exactly a sports car. That's no real criticism, as buyers won't be looking for groundbreaking handling prowess, but they might be disappointed by a slightly sharp-edged ride over rougher surfaces.

It's a refined cruiser, though, with some clever aerodynamic touches on the slippery body reducing wind noise. It's also a tech-fest, with Hyundai's semi-autonomous systems making life just that little bit easier. Lane-follow assist – a combination of radar-guided cruise control and lane-keeping functions – works brilliantly, keeping the car steadier than most rival systems. There's also an innovative blind spot monitoring system, which displays a camera feed of the car's blind spot in the instrument cluster when you indicate. It will also park itself while you're outside it.

The Nexo is all new, from its futuristic powertrain to the concept car-esque styling

The Hyundai Nexo looks every bit the futuristic SUV and remains remarkably true to its concept. The glamorous touches don't seem contrived or compromised, though, and the result is a slick-looking crossover with some really interesting design details.

The full-width LED light bar across the front gives an eye-catching signature, especially in the dark, while glittery tail lights give a similar effect at the rear. The streamlined alloy wheels are less successful and look a little cheap, but the sides of the car are brought back up to par with sleek hidden door handles.

Overall, the effect is close enough to a standard crossover that it won't alienate buyers who don't like to stand out, but there's enough visual interest to satisfy most.

This is one of the most premium Hyundai interiors yet, and there's a very 'Lexus' feel to the high-set centre console. However, it's dotted with a rash of cheap-feeling buttons and decked out in the sort of silver plastic you'd find on an early 2000s Mercedes SLK. Very appealing to the North American market; less so to Europeans.

There's plenty of room on offer, though, with a 461-litre boot, decent rear legroom and good storage for oddments in and around the cabin.

What can't be argued with is the tech on offer in the Nexo. There's a digital instrument display and widescreen infotainment unit that works rather well, the aforementioned safety and driver aids, climate control, heated and cooled seats, LED lights front and rear and a powered tailgate.

However, you'd expect all this from such an expensive car. Hydrogen tech is in its infancy and as such can't be offered at the same price as electric rivals. We'd expect to see the Hyundai to be priced near £60,000, dipping to around £55,000 when the government's electric car grant is taken into account.

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The latest Fabia comes with a suite of new safety kit

Updated Fabia to start from £12,840

Škoda has announced pricing and specifications for the latest update to its Fabia supermini. The range kicks off from just £12,840 for a model in S trim, fitted with the 74bhp 1.0-litre petrol engine.

That starting price undercuts its sister car, the Volkswagen Polo by £1,395 – and that's for a VW fitted with the lesser-powered 59bhp engine.

The latest Fabia comes with a suite of new safety kit plus improved connectivity, as well as Škoda's latest 'Simply Clever' touches.

The range kicks off with the naturally aspirated, 1.0-litre engine with 74bhp. It's capable of 0-60mph in a rather lengthy 14.7 seconds, but Skoda claims a fuel consumption of nearly 59mpg and CO2 emissions of 110g/km.

Moving up the range there are two turbocharged petrols with 94bhp or 108bhp. It's the latter that's the only car available with an automatic gearbox, which is an option above the standard six-speed manual. The two lower-powered cars get five-speed manual gearboxes. Fuel consumption tops out at 61mpg, with the 94bhp model boasting the lowest CO2 emissions of just 104g/km.

Trim levels start with basic S, which still gains autonomous emergency braking, LED daytime running lights and a trip computer.

SE trim, from £14,115 gains front foglights plus 15-inch alloy wheels, while stylish Colour Edition adds 16-inch wheels and unique paint finishes for its £14,665 starting price.

Top-spec SE L is priced from £15,205 brings serious big-car equipment, including standard sat-nav and connected services. The top of the range Monte Carlo is the luxurious option in the range though, with climate control air-conditioning, LED lights, rear electric windows and black trim. It costs from £16,785.

All but Colour Edition models are available as an Estate. This adds £1,020 onto the base price of the S model.

What's the coolest car on the school run?

Automotive expert HPI has revealed the top five list of cars guaranteed to boost the 'school gate cred' of UK mums and dads following a poll amongst its team of specialist motoring editors.

Derren Martin

The poll comes ahead of the new school term in September.

Derren Martin, head of current valuations at HPI, said: "With the return to school imminent after the long, hot summer we thought it would be fun to look at some of the makes and models of cars that can give the ultimate feeling of school gate cred.

"Our team of editors considered everything from top of the range supercars and concept cars but eventually decided to keep it real by settling for more realistic and practical vehicles that would really appeal to parents but still have some wow factor."

The top five list of cars offering the greatest school gate cred is as follows:

1) Jaguar F-Pace
2) Range Rover Evoque
3) VW Tiguan
4) Audi TT
5) BMW X1

Derren added: "The Jaguar F-Pace just edged it in our editors' poll ahead of the Evoque and the Tiguan. With its iconic Jaguar heritage in a popular SUV body style, the F-Pace is sporty and compact yet relatively affordable.

"The popularity of SUVs shows no sign of letting up and manufacturers are pulling out all the stops to make sure their models turn heads."

Megane R.S. brings added agility to hot-hatch segment

By Jack Evans

The arrival of any new performance Renault is an exciting thing, but here's a new car from the French manufacturer to really get the pulses of petrolheads racing – the Megane R.S.

A reimagined version of an iconic hot-hatch, this latest R.S. packs a new turbocharged engine as well as a range of mechanical touches designed to make it as exciting to drive as possible. It has some capable rivals to go up against though, which is why we've headed out to our favourite routes to see what this new Megane R.S. can really do.

There's a lot to talk about with the new Megane R.S. There's that new engine – though we'll look at this in more depth further on – along with a four-wheel-steering system designed to give the car better agility and stability both on road and track. Our test car also comes with the Cup Chassis pack – this incorporates a limited slip differential, stiffer springs and dampers along with an anti-roll bar – as well as some all-important red brake calipers.

We think the Megane R.S. looks excellent, particularly in the 'Volcanic Orange' of the test car

Flexible

The Megane R.S. uses a 1.8-litre turbocharged petrol engine which here produces 276bhp and 390Nm of torque. It shares this powerplant with the Alpine A110 sports car, in fact, and it's a flexible unit indeed thanks to a decent amount of low-down punch. It's driven through either a dual-clutch automatic gearbox or, in our test car's case, a six-speed manual.

It'll crack 60mph in 5.6 seconds, and continue onwards to a top speed of 158mph. As a result of the turbocharging, the R.S. can return relatively good economy figures too – Renault claims 39.2mpg on the combined cycle, while emissions are reasonable at 163g/km CO2. It's a good balance between genuine performance and economy, which is just what you want from a useable daily hot hatch.

The first thing you notice about the way the Megane R.S. drives comes as a result of the inclusion of that four-wheel-steering. When you're attacking a bend, there's a sensation that the car is tightening in on itself.

It's unnerving to begin with, but once you're used to it it gives you the confidence to come into bends quicker than you may have initially thought. It also gives the car a lot of agility in day-to-day driving, such as when exiting a roundabout or even just turning out of tighter junctions. Whereas in Sport mode this is limited to usage up to around 30mph, in Race mode this is around 60mph.

The only real issue lies with the Cup chassis. It's brilliant, minimising body roll while giving the Megane an overall feeling of alertness, but the by-product is a general unsettled feeling – the car has a tendency to be dragged by ruts in the road, and you seem to be fighting the steering at times to make it go in a straight line.

We think the Megane R.S. looks excellent, particularly in the 'Volcanic Orange' of our test car. The widened rear track looks particularly purposeful, while the variety of inlets and vents really do help to give the car a lot of presence. Our test car also came with intricate 19-inch 'Interlagos' alloy wheels, which complement the extended arches well.

It's an excellent compromise between understated looks and the over-the-top styling that we've come to expect from hot hatches – Honda Civic Type R, we're looking at you.

The Megane's cabin benefits from a smattering of what we'd call 'sporty' touches; there's the obligatory bolstered bucket seats, alongside an Alcantara-trimmed steering wheel which is refreshingly circular when compared to the popular flattened-off style. Is it lacking in that 'wow' factor that we'd hope for from a hot hatch? Perhaps. But everything is well positioned, and the general seat position is spot-on, with plenty in the way of adjustment.

There's even 384 litres of boot space to play with, which is more than you'll find in the Volkswagen Golf. This can be extended to 1,247 litres by folding down the rear seats, too.

As standard, the R.S. gets a good degree of standard equipment. There's Renault's latest R-LINK2 infotainment system, which is accessed via a seven-inch touchscreen that dominates the centre of the cabin. The four-wheel-steer system is included as standard, as is a regular sport chassis.

However, our car featured a variety of optional extras. The Cup Chassis Pack, for instance, costs £1,500, while that out-there paintwork commanded £1,300. A larger 8.7-inch centre touchscreen comes with a £300 premium, while the upgraded Bose sound system – which is excellent – requires a further £800. All in, our test car came to £34,345, a considerable hike over the £27,495 base price. Keener drivers will no doubt see the addition of the Cup Pack as a must-have, and we'd have to agree too.

The Renault Megane R.S. is an exceptionally accomplished hot hatch, and one that feels perfectly suited to the UK's country roads. Though the new four-wheel-steer system takes a little getting used to, it enables the Megane to deliver a truly sharp driving experience. The car's negative is its need to be driven towards the upper reaches in order to get the best from it – at lower speeds it feels just a little too firm. However, commit to the car and it'll reward you time and time again.

Used car market is in good health

Britain's used car market held strong in 2018's second quarter, with sales down by a marginal 0.4 per cent, according to figures released today by the Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders (SMMT).

A total of 2,093,429 vehicles changed hands, just 8,725 fewer than the same three months in 2017.

Superminis remained the most popular segment, despite a 2.6 per cent decline. They accounted for a third of the market (32.6 per cent) and were followed by small and medium-sized family cars.

SUVs and executive models experienced the biggest growth, with demand up 10.7 per cent and 3.9 per cent respectively.

The popularity of diesel cars grew 3.2 per cent, with some 868,573 used buyers driving one home in the period, while transactions involving petrol-powered vehicles fell by 3.3 per cent.

Meanwhile, demand for hybrid, plug-in hybrid and fully electric vehicles grew by more than a quarter, with some 26,832 changing hands – 5,417 more than a year ago. Elsewhere, trends closely followed the new car market, with black the UK's most popular used car colour for a second consecutive quarter and silver and blue taking second and third places. Demand for white cars grew fastest, up 9.8 per cent, followed by orange, up 9.1 per cent.

Meanwhile, green and maroon lost most favour among buyers, falling 14.6 per cent and 9.6 per cent respectively.

Mike Hawes, SMMT chief executive, said: "It's great to see the used car sector remain in robust health as motorists take advantage of the exciting high-tech models filtering down from the new sector – including some of the latest low-emission diesel and alternatively-fuelled vehicles.

"However, with used sales so closely reflecting the new car market, some cooling is expected over the coming months. Given fleet renewal is the fastest way to improve air quality and reduce CO2, we need greater business and consumer confidence to keep both markets moving."

2,093,429 vehicles changed hands, 8,725 fewer than the same three months in 2017

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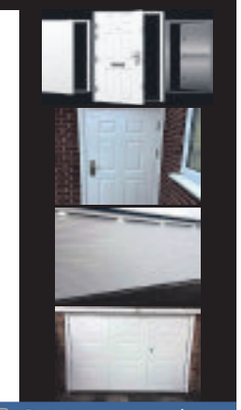

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01384 387 016

TERRA FIRMA ARBORICULTURE

info@terrafirma-arb.co.uk
www.terrafirma-arb.co.uk

IT'S FREE, IT'S EASY

**Advertise any item FREE up to the value of £250*
go to: www.expressandstar.com/bookanad

*T&C's apply

FreeAds

Classified Ads

Buy Local, **Sell** Local

Funeral Directors

J.T. BROOKES

Independent family run Funeral Directors
24 hour service
Brierley Hill 01384 77098
Kingswinford 01384 296683
Hagley 01562 888041
www.nedowning.co.uk

Wombourne Funeral Services & Monumental Masons
For your nearest branch call 01902 892635
wombournefuneralservices.co.uk

Christadelphian

THE TRUE TEACHING OF THE BIBLE The devil and satan - who or what they are, August 26, at 6pm, The Community Centre, High Street, Kingswinford. Or write to The Dawn (ref:KCE) 5 Station Road, Carlton, Notts. NG4 3AT for free information pack or ring 01384 886544 for recorded message.

1 Family

Elderly & Disabled

WORLD OF MOBILITY
Stourbridge's longest established Family Run Mobility Store
Brettell Lane, Amblecote, Stourbridge DY8 4BS. Open Mon-Sat.
01384 378252

LARGE MOBILITY Scooter. £400. Must collect. 07950 235297. Stourbridge.

WREKIN STAIRLIFTS reconditioned lifts from £799. New available. 01952 405397/07897 273617

Car Boot Sales

ASHWOOD CAR BOOT Sunday 6am. By Roberts Farm Shop on A449 DY6 0AA. 07710644490 www.ashwoodcarboot.co.uk

Caravans Wanted

All Caravans Wanted
Any Age or Condition
CASH * WAITING
Immediate collection
Call Bill on 07825 325 913

LET US SELL YOUR CARAVAN/ Motorhome for you and get the best possible price. Severn Valley Leisure, DY8 4HP. 01384 390183

Caravans/ Motorhomes

A BEAUTIFUL PARK NR LUDLOW 35x12 caravans from £10,000.Gym Par 3 golf, bowls, why go further? www.bcpark.co.uk 01584823433.

COMPASS RALLYE 460 / 2

Special Edition GTE, criss reg, showroom condition inside and out, including accessories such as fresh and foul water tanks, pipes, pump and main cable, ready, available to go.

Bargain £2,650.

01384 254530.

SIX BERTH 2 shower, DG, CH Caravan, large UPVC decking enclosed patio, last plot on small rural site, near to Newtown. £14,950. All inclusive 07891 528061. (T)

Caravan Holiday home for sale

2010 swift Moselle £24,495
2 beds, bright open plan, well looked after, family shower room plus separate en-suite Castle view 5★ Caravan Holiday Home Park - Ultimate Coastal retreat
Minutes from glorious sandy beaches & world famous golf Course and Historic Harlech Castle .
Call Sue or Richard 01766 780328
www.castleviewpark.co.uk

STATIC CARAVAN 35 x 12
With large decking, on quiet site in Mid Wales.
Two fishing pools.
Dog Friendly. No age limit.
Site fees for 2018 included.
£7,500.
07555 303350.

STATIC CARAVAN FOR SALE

2 bedrooms, 35ft x 12ft, farm site, decking and parking, peace and quiet, fishing and walks, Chelmarsh Shropshire. Adults only.

£12,000

01746 861192.

VW T5 TRANSPORTER 2.5 TDI LWB CAMPER/DAY VAN
VW T5 camper conversion 158k miles 6 speed fsh 130 bhp new mot in mat silver t5.1 front end/cl/ led lights cooker/sink and gas bottle 240v mains hook up usb plugs r+r bed just over 12m old inside vgc hpi clear
£11,999 ono
07850 039525.

Jumble Sales / Fetes

BRIC-A-BRAC FAIR
Sunday, 26th August
Next Sale: September 9.
KINVER COMMUNITY CENTRE, DY7 6ER
10.30am - 4pm
Tel: 01384 894464

Music Shop

DRUMMER REQUIRED Preferably with ability to sing for well established working rock n roll/60's band. 07896 738851.

Sports & Leisure

FreeAds
IT'S FREE, IT'S EASY
To sell items upto £250.
Online at
bookanad.expressandstar.co.uk

holidays

Caravan Sales

A CHOICE OF CARAVANS FOR sale from £1995 to £6995, accessory shop, service, repairs,storage. Severn Valley Leisure Stourbridge,DY8 4HP 01384 390183 www.severnvalleyleisure.com

Self Catering Holidays

BURNHAM-ON-SEA
Self Catering Holiday Apartments
Disabled Facilities
Pet Friendly
01278 794111
www.GoSomerset.co.uk

Travel Abroad

READERS ARE REMINDED to check with any Advertisers that their holiday costs are fully covered by a recognised bonding or insurance scheme.

Yorkshire

YORKSHIRE DALES
Meadow Holidays
Country Cottages / Suites in Wensleydale
" Weeks from £209 per couple
" Weekends just £99 per couple
Families Welcome
Walk in scenic countryside by waterfalls or visit historic market towns with friendly Inns
Brochure (24hrs) 01969 624145
email: rita@meadowholidays.com
www.meadowholidays.com

what's on

Antique Fairs

ANTIQUE & COLLECTORS FAIR Every month. Codsall Village Hall, Sunday 26th August 9am-3pm. Call Brian: 07923 538178.

Markets

STOURBRIDGE CAR BOOT
At Stourbridge Rugby Club
Open every Wednesday from 16th May
07957 399964

3 Home & Services

Furniture

BED 5FT KINGSIZE
Luxury 10 inch deep memory foam mattress, divan base. Excellent quality, unused.
Cost over £1,000.
Accept £245.
Telephone 07787 636984.

OLD CAHRM furniture, sideboard, coffee table, bookcase, china cabinet, Tudor brown. Excellent condition. For details 07790 605680.

PINE BEDROOM furniture, 2 wardrobes, dressing table and double bed. £250. 01384 829969.

WOODEN BUNKBEDS with 2 waterproof mattresses, £100 ono. 07765 330671.

Household Appliances

UNDER WORKTOP larder fridge and freezer, very good condition. £45 each. 07871 043769.

Items For Sale

ADVERTISERS ARE REMINDED
That the Business Advertisements(Disclosure) Order of 1977 requires that advertisements must clearly differentiate between Private and Trade.

CORRUGATED GALVANISED Sheets. New, £8 can deliver. Also rooflights and box profile. David Broxton on 07834 489558.

EVEREST CONSERVATORY
Cost £26,000
Sell £4,200.
Two years old.
07870 600483 / 01902 428190.

HAVE YOU CHECKED your advertisement today? We would respectfully remind advertisers that it is their responsibility to inform the publishers of any mistakes or inaccuracies on the first day of publication.

Loans

READERS ARE REMINDED that they may require professional advice before entering into obligations.

Items Wanted

A BEST CASH PRICE PAID FOR DIE CAST CARS / LORRIES
Britains, Corgi, Dinky, Spot on, Tri-ang, Danbury Mint and Mamod Engines.
Best prices paid.
Any condition.
Collections bought.
Telephone 01922 327897 or 07976 691563.

BEST CASH PRICE

FOR ALL RAILWAY COLLECTIONS
Any gauge or age
Hornby/Bachmann/Bowmans/ Roundhouse/Graham/Farsh/ any live steam. Also Die Cast, Corgi, Dinky, Spot On.
01384 836219/07891 713547
thetrainmaster67@hotmail.com

MOBILITY SCOOTER WANTED urgently. 0121 440 2867. 07804 239956.

OLD POCKET and wrist watches wanted, all conditions, also watch menders clearances, parts, etc. 01746 765278. 07773 345218.

READERS ARE ADVISED to carefully consider all of their options before agreeing to the sale of any of their items.

WANTED NINTENDO SEGA OLD GAMES AND CONSOLES
Nintendo Sega, Atari, Commodore, etc.
Old toys, Starwars, He-Man, Wrestlers, Transformers, etc. Comics, graphic novels, football shirts.
Cash Paid.
07866 691968.

t.v. / home entertainment

Service

AERIAL AND TV SPECIALIST Any TV Repairs. Digital aerials, sky, CCTV cameras. TV wall mounts and TV set ups. 07850 330251.

specialists at your service

Accountants

QUALIFIED ACCOUNTANT
Accounts, Bookkeeping, Tax, CIS and Payroll
0121 5501094
Free consult no obligation
www.accountantsbirmingham.net

Aerials

A AERIAL & SKY SPECIALIST
Digital Aerials Fitted
Sky & CCTV Cameras
Free Quotes. 7 days
07850 330251

Alarms/Security

PREMIER ALARMS
Supplied and Fitted £249
Servicing and Repairs
12 Months Warranty
All areas covered
All quotes beaten!
Call: 0121 601 9791

Building Services

DAVIES & SON BUILDERS
All Building & Roofing Work
Driveways, Landscaping
Over 40 year exp | All work guaranteed
Free Quotes: 07837 994465
01902 831316

Carpet & Upholstery Cleaning

A CLASS Carpet & Upholstery Cleaning Unbeatable Prices. OAP discounts. Call Paul 07870 341089

Electrical Services

STEVE JONES ELECTRICAL Rewires/sockets/fuse boards etc. All domestic and commercial work. 07786 858977/01902 846167.

Fencing

TRUST CLASSIFIEDS!

"I am extremely happy with the service I get from my Express & Star Classified Sales Representatives and would recommend them to anyone! They have done a very professional job with my website so I get online enquiries as well now."

Michael- Portway Fencing

For great business results call
01902 319 191
ClassifiedAds
Brought to you by Express & Star

PORTWAY FENCING
SPECIAL OFFER
10 Bays of quality fencing, concrete posts, gravel boards **£795**
Heavy duty panels supplied & fitted.
0121 531 5250 / 07866 137 656
Mon - Fri 8am - 4.30pm
Sat 8am - 12noon
83 Portway Rd, W'bury
DELIVERY AVAILABLE
www.portwayfencing.co.uk

Gardening Services

K.M. GARDEN CARE
We offer you a professional gardening service whether it is one-off jobs, weekly to monthly
WE SPECIALISE IN:
General Maintenance, Hedge Cutting, Mowing Lawns, Turfing, Strimming, Weeding, Jetwash Patio/Drives, Fence Panel Replacements, Garden Tidy Up, Window Cleaning
Please Call For More Details
07482216162
E:kmgardencare@hotmail.com

GARDENS TIDIED from £5 per garden. 25 years experience. Call 01902 713106 / 07813 184086.

Gas Fitting

READERS ARE ADVISED
To check that anyone carrying out any Gas work is Gas Safe Registered.

It is an offence under the Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998 to carry out gas work in the UK without being on the Gas Safe Register.

House Clearances

ABSOLUTELY ANYTHING CLEARED
FULL OR PART, GARAGES AND SHEDS RUBBISH REMOVED WASTE LICENCE
01384 486456 / 07711661135

A ABSOLUTE BEST cash price paid for house clearances and bereavements. Also removals undertaken. 07852 172641 / 07710 360327 / 01902 534021

Painters/ Decorators

LOVE 2 WALLPAPER
Reliable & Friendly, Professional
Female Painters & Decorators
Attention to detail, competitive prices.
For the Perfect Finish with minimum hassle.
Plastering & Coving Work Undertaken
01384 287577 or 07812 484194
www.love-2-wallpaper.co.uk

Removals

KINGSWINFORD REMOVALS AND HOUSE CLEARANCES
We move anything.
Professional service,
45 years' experience,
DFS approved and we take the stress away.
Please call:
07966 281957

CALL DEAN NOW: For all your Removal needs. 07429 453209/ 01902 830870 / 01384 940260.

CALL IAN. Man with a large van. No job too small, no distance too far. 07973 628534, 01902 891535.

KT HOUSE REMOVALS
13 years experience.
SINGLE ITEMS TO FULL LOADS.
LOCAL OR DISTANCE. FULLY INSURED.
Free Quotes - Call Ric on:
07771 727119

Rubbish Removal

TRUST CLASSIFIEDS!

"I am very pleased with the response I get from my Classified Advertising Contract"

Steve - AA Digital Aerials

For great business results call
01902 319 191
ClassifiedAds
Brought to you by Express & Star

LETS TALK RUBBISH No skips needed. Load/remove any waste house clearance. 07969 628382

Skip Hire

BIG JOHN MOVES RUBBISH! No Skips, we load, fast friendly service, 25 Lister Rd, Dudley DY2 8JR, Est 40 years, 01384 232359.

4 Pets & Animals

Equestrian Corner

ALL READERS are advised to check if Horses, Donkeys or Ponies have the required Passport information, this is a legal requirement.

Guns & Dogs

NOTICE TO ADVERTISERS
Advertisers must ensure that they meet all necessary legal requirements for owning and using guns.

Pets Corner

GREYHOUNDS MAKE WONDERFUL PETS
All neutered, innoculated and microchipped.
Call 01902 291080 or visit
www.gtwolverhampton.co.uk
Greyhound Trust Wolverhampton
@gtwolverhampton

NOTICE TO READERS
Please be aware that when purchasing a puppy there are some simple guidelines you can follow to ensure that you are not purchasing from a Puppy Farmer:
1. Try to ensure you visit the puppy whilst it is still with it's Mother.
2. Do not arrange to collect a puppy from any other location than that of the breeder.
3. Ensure that you are given any KC documentation, if pedigree.
Whilst Midland News Association publications take great care to avoid publication of advertisements from Puppy Farmers we cannot accept any liability should readers purchase from this kind of establishment.

GERMAN SHEPHERD puppies, big boned, 8 weeks old, nearly all black and bit of sable. wormed to date and microchipped, ready to go. 01384 78588.

GREYHOUNDS MAKE WONDERFUL PETS
All neutered, innoculated and microchipped.
Call 01902 291080 or visit
www.gtwolverhampton.co.uk
Greyhound Trust Wolverhampton
@gtwolverhampton

MINIATURE DACHSHUNDS home reared, both parents can be seen, ready beginning Sep. 1 chocolate girl, 1 chocolate boy, 1 boy, black, 1 black and tan boy. £1,000 ono. 07872 555274.

PEDIGREE TOY Poodle puppies, boys and girls, microchipped, inoculated etc, £800. 07597 537362.

TWO BICHON Frise puppies, 1 male, 1 female, ready to go now. 0121 422 2783.

5 Business & Farming

Business Opportunities

READERS are recommended to take appropriate professional advice before entering into any obligations.

6 Property

Accommodation To Let

NOTICE TO READERS
It is an offence under the Accommodation Agencies Act 1953, for an Agency to charge a fee simply for the registration of your requirements and/or supplying particulars of premises to let.

NOTICE TO READERS
Readers are advised to seek independent legal advice before entering into any financial commitments/contracts.

Overseas Property

NOTICE TO READERS
Readers are advised to seek independent legal advice before entering into any financial commitments.

Properties Wanted

Yes! HOMEBUYERS
We will buy your house fast!
Free Valuation? Yes! Any House? Yes!
Fast Sale? Yes! Any Location? Yes!
No Fees? Yes! Any Condition? Yes!
FREE, GUARANTEED, instant offer today!
Call 01562 277 067
or text "Cash" to 66777
yeshomebuyers.com

Home Cash Buyer
Sell today, sign today, complete when u wish
£££ RENT BACK OPTIONS £££
Houses / Land Required
We also buy Commercial Property
Ring Paul 24/7 Local **07870 341 089**
Sandwell area: Call 0121 696 4154
Walsall & Cannock area: Call 01922 432049
Wolverhampton: Call 01902 489901
www.homecashbuyer.co.uk

7 Jobs

Courses

ABK SECURITY SERVICES LIMITED
We provide Training in:
• First Aid / Health & Safety • Safe Moving & Handling • Security (SIA)
Call 01299 879 015
Email enquiries@abktraining.co.uk | www.abksecurity.com

Employment Wanted

SEMI-RETIRED DRIVER
Clean drivers licence,
small vans and pick up trucks,
full or part time work.
07923 058819/01902 676476.

Hotel & Catering

FULL TIME CHEF required at the Cat Inn, Enville, Stourbridge. Salary depending on experience. Call Aimee or Dan on 01384 872209.

Full Time General

Star Employment

Star Employment Services are currently recruiting for the following temporary positions:

- **Production Operative**
  £8.00 per hour - Halesowen
- **Team Leader**
  £23,500 per annum - Halesowen
- **CNC Operators**
  Wolverhampton - £7.83 per hour - £8.30 per hour
- **Customer Support Coordinator**
  Wolverhampton - £18,000 per annum
- **Foundry Operative**
  Cradley Heath - £7.70 per hour
- **Maintenance Engineer**
  Cradley Heath - £13.00 - £14.00 per hour
- **Bonding Labourer Days**
  Cannock - £17,000 - £18,000 per annum
- **Team Leaders Nights**
  Cannock - £9.00 per annum
- **Trainee Tig Welder**
  Cannock - £7.60 - £8.00 per hour
- **Trainee Press Brake Setter Operator**
  Cannock - £7.83 - £8.00 per hour.

For further information please visit our website
www.staremploymentservices.co.uk
Or to apply for any positions please call
01902 319333
or email CV to
jobs@staremploymentservices.co.uk

Star Employment

Star Employment Services are currently recruiting for the following permanent positions:

- **Business Development Manager**
  West Bromwich
  £25,000pa
- **2 x Internal Call & Counter Specialist**
  West Bromwich
  £25,000pa
- **2 x HGV Technician** (Afternoon shift)
  Wolverhampton
  £31,000pa
- **Technician** (Late Shift)
  Birmingham
  £24,000pa
- **Field Sales**
  Stourbridge
  £25,000 - £30,000pa
- **Slitting Setter/Operator**
  Brierley Hill
  £18,720pa
- **Toolmaker**
  West Bromwich
  £25,000 - £30,000pa
- **Maintenance Engineer** –
  Wolverhampton
  £25,000 - £33,000pa
- **Grinder**
  Wednesbury
  £21,000 - £27,000pa
- **Miller**
  Wednesbury
  £21,000 - £27,000pa
- **Maintenance Engineer**
  Wednesbury
  £25,000 - £30,000pa
- **Finnish Speaking Sales Person** -
  Stafford
  £18,000-£24,000pa
- **Injection Mould Tool Designer** –
  Dudley
  £30,000 - £38,000pa
- **Junior Mechanical Engineer** –
  Walsall
  £18,720 - £20,800pa
- **Telesales Executive**
  Telford
  £16,000 - £18,000pa
- **Field Sales**
  Telford/ Shrewsbury
  £20,000pa

To apply for any of the above positions contact
01902 319333
or email CV to
jobs@staremploymentservices.co.uk

8 Motoring

Cars Over £1500

HAVE YOU CHECKED your advertisement today? We would respectfully remind advertisers that it is their responsibility to inform the publishers of any mistakes or inaccuracies on the first day of publication.

LOW MILEAGE

BMW 5 SERIES AUTOMATIC TOURER
2011
Silver, 31,000 miles.
FSH
£10,950.
07739 556295.

FORD FIESTA ZETEC 5DR
2010. 83,000 miles.
FSH
One owner from new, superb condition.
£3,495.
01903 744023.

MAZDA MX5 1,6
2004 blue, EW, ABS, power steering, service history. extras.
£1,950 ono
07747 312237.

Express & Star

FIXED PRICE RECRUITMENT PACKAGE

FILL YOUR NEXT VACANCY WITH OUR BRONZE FIXED PRICE RECRUITMENT PACKAGE

Bronze package includes:

- 5cm x 2 column advert in Express & Star (Thursday)
- 5cm x 2 column advert in Chronicle of your choice
- Two week listing on jobs.expressandstar.com
- 5 line advert to appear in Express & Star Classified jobs for 5 nights
- We will run the lineage and online advert on a daily basis until you fill the vacancy

Package Price £399*

Contact **Lee Smith**
on **01902 319659** or email
lee.smith@expressandstar.co.uk

*All prices are subject to VAT

NISSAN FIGARO
Paie screen, very good condition, new hood, new chrome, new wheel arches, 10 months MoT, drives really well.
£5,495 o.n.o.
01902 757542/07812 982490

BARGAIN

RENAULT CLIO 1.2 DYNMANIQUE
09 reg, black, 49,000 miles 5-dr, full MoT, PAS, central locking, electric windows and mirrors,
£1695 ono.
07722 998594.

LOW MILEAGE

VAUXHALL CORSA 1200cc,
Red 2013, 63 reg, 3-dr, 25,000 miles from new, PAS, alloys, air con, CD, Mot till December, like new.
£4,750.
01384 594803.

Cars Under £1500

MUST BE SEEN

FIAT PUNTO GRANDE
1.2, 07 reg, full MoT, very good condition. Excellent drive.
£1095.
07486 468359
07986 873661

BARGAIN

KIA CARENS
2005, 5dr
Seven months MoT
New discs, pads and tyres.
Engine and gearbox oil change.
41 mpg
£1,000 ono.
01902 782642.

GOOD RUNNER

NISSAN MICRA
1.2, 04 reg, 12 months MoT, 78,000 miles, slight mark on door, metallic silver, very good condition,
£975 ono.
07864 842076.

SUBARU FORESTER
2000. Petrol,
137,850 miles,
engine rebuilt at 127,784 miles.
New clutch, cam belt,
recent front discs and pads,
cat converter.
MoT till May 2019.
Genuine callers only please.
£950.
Tel: 07795 001603.

MUST BE SEEN

SUZUKI WAGON R
X reg.
1.3 litre. petrol.
64,000 miles.
12 months MoT.
Yellow.
Very good condition.
£695.
07583 900461.

VOLKSWAGEN GOLF
2003, 105000 miles, Grey, MOT April 2018, 1.6 petrol
£800
07779729937

BARGAIN

VW BEETLE
1400 convertible, 03 reg, full MoT, no advisories,
rare 1400 model
£1,150 ono.
07972 169554.

VW POLO
1034cc,
1986,
White classic saloon
Two door.
Best offer.
01902 783416.

Commercial Vehicles

FIAT SCUDO FRIDGE VAN
1.9 Diesel, Nov 2003,
excellent condition
Ideal business vehicle, fully serviced and MoT'd,
£850.
07816 414566

Motorbikes

SYM JET
50cc, new MoT,
12,000 miles,
£395.
01902 655467.

Scrap Vehicles

A1 SF RECOVERY
SCRAP CARS WANTED
£100 Minimum Guaranteed
paid for complete cars
Collection 7 days a week
07813 184611

mainline Salvage & Recovery
- *SCRAP CARS WANTED*
- *FREE COLLECTION*
- *TOP PRICES PAID*

Fully Licensed • C.O.D Issued
No Fines • No Comebacks
1000's of vehicle parts in stock
01902 871111 • 07772 240819
07895 346811
www.mainlinesalvage.co.uk

A BETTER PRICE
for scrap or damaged cars and commercials. Spares for sale.
NINE LOCKS VEHICLE DISMANTLERS LTD
Brierley Hill 01384 76566 or 70553. Evenings 75397. DY5 3JZ.

OUR ADVERTISERS are reminded that it is an offence under the Scrap Metal Dealers Act 2013 to buy scrap cars/metal for cash.

Vehicles Wanted

WANTED

CLASSIC CAR
Looking for Classic Car.
Triumph / MG/ JAG/ Porsche etc.
Will consider anything interesting, good or bad, running or not even if it's been standing a while.
Cash paid.
Please Tel:
Mr. Bate. 07733 784015.

alan reed cars
Used cars wanted for cash
Top prices paid. HP settled.
Buyer could call.
01562 711083 / 07831 245313

spares & accessories

Accessories & Services

WO18 VES (WOLVES) - NUMBER PLATE
Not registered to a vehicle.
On a retention certificate ready for a new owner!
Able to go on vehicles registered from March 1, 2018.
£5,995 ono
07429 531226.

Clutches/Brakes/ Gearboxes

A CLUTCH CHANGE MOBILE
Petrol Nissan Qashqai, Juke, Note, Vauxhall Zafira, Corsa New Clios, Picantos and MANY MORE!!
Ring for quotes
30 yrs experience
ALL AREAS COVERED
Call Bob
01384 251328 07972 169554
anytime

9 Local Information

Public Notices

PUBLIC & LEGAL NOTICES
For convenience you may fax any advertising requirements to Marie Hogg on **01902 319694** or email **marie.hogg@expressandstar.co.uk**
(remember to include a name/ contact number for confirmation of receipt)

LICENSING ACT 2003
NOTICE OF APPLICATION FOR PREMISES LICENCE
NOTICE IS GIVEN THAT **TJX UK** has applied to Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council on 16th August 2018 for the grant of a premises licence to use the premises at **Homesense, Unit 1A, Merry Hill Shopping Centre, Brierley Hill, DY5 1QX** for the sale by retail of alcohol for consumption off the premises only, on Monday to Friday 09:00 to 20:00, Saturday 09:00 to 19:00 and Sunday 10:30 to 17:00 as more particularly set out in the application.
Any person who wishes to make a representation in relation to this application must give notice in writing to: **Licensing Department, Unit 1 Hurst Business Park, Narrow Boat Way, Brierley Hill, DY5 1UF** to be received by no later than 12th September 2018 stating the grounds for making said representation.
The register and a record of the application can be inspected on the Council's website www.dudley.gov.uk or by appointment at the Council's offices during office hours.
It is an offence, under section 158 of the Licensing Act 2003, to knowingly or recklessly make a false statement in or in connection with an application for a premises licence and the maximum fine on being convicted of such an offence is unlimited.
Thomas & Thomas Partners LLP 38a Monmouth Street, London WC2H 9EP www.tandtp.com

10 Personals

Personal

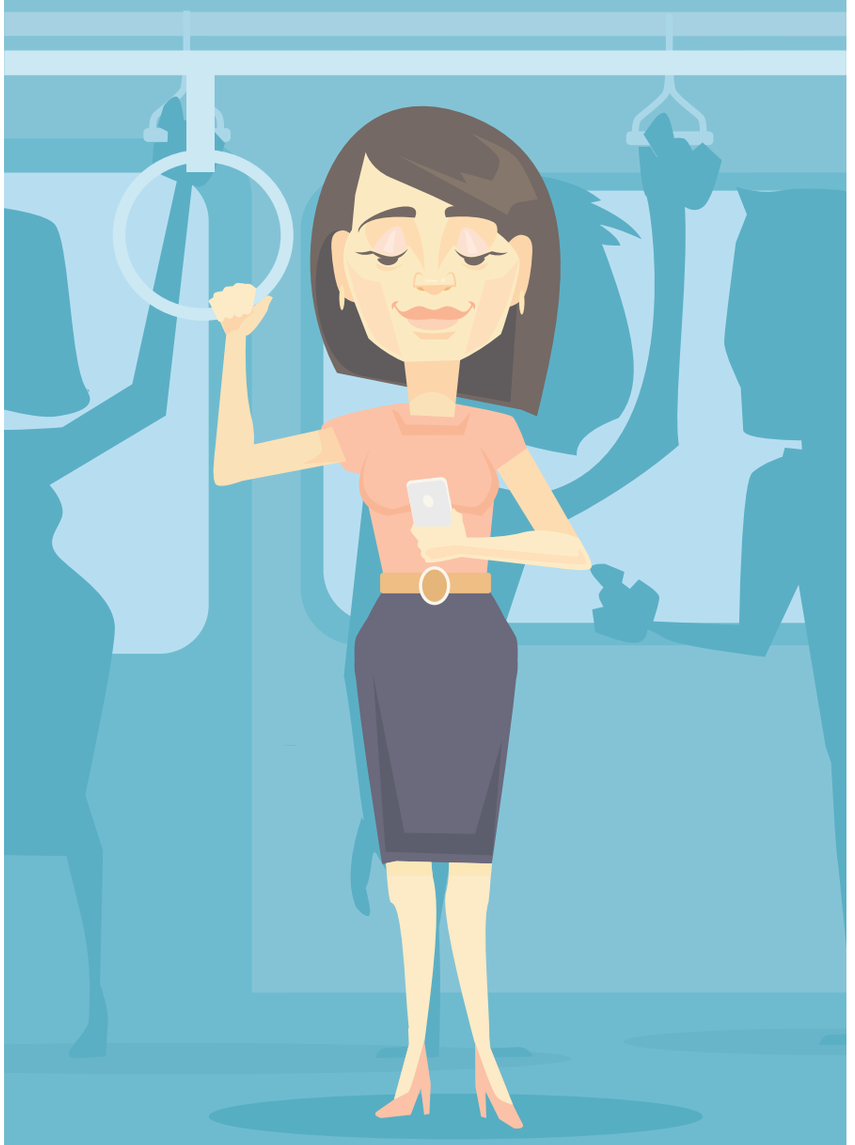
HI GENTLEMEN WELL HERE GOES
I am a widow, 75 years young.
Was once a couple.
(Might I say a very happy couple).
Would like to give happiness a try once more.
So come on Gents.
Lets try again.
Please reply,
You never know. ? X.
Box Number P21223 , Express and Star, Queen Street, Wolverhampton, WV1 1ES.

LONELY Ladies, sexy single mums/ divorcees looking for male attention/ dates, 30+. 07008 026348

BOOK YOUR ADVERTISEMENTS OR FAMILY ANNOUNCEMENTS ONLINE AT
bookanad. expressandstar.co.uk
and become one of hundreds of customers who regularly receive exclusive special offers & discounts.

ClassifiedAds

REACH CUSTOMERS ON THE MOVE



Advertise your business on the NEW LOOK Express & Star website
www.expressandstar.com
To find out how you can benefit call MNA Digital on 01902 319730
MNA DIGITAL

The all-conquering Walsall side with Archer, centre, front row, as captain

A Walsall team picture rom 1976. Archer is on the far right end of the front row

Nick Archer with a famed picture of the 1976 team

Archer is handed a commemorative bat after a Lord's win over Chorley

Archer raises his bat to a half-century of service

NICK ARCHER celebrated countless half-centuries during his playing days – but it's doubtful any gave him as much pride as his latest one.

The bat, pads and gloves may have been discarded a few years ago but that hasn't stopped the former Walsall and Staffordshire batsman chalking up another milestone.

Archer, 62, is currently enjoying his 50th season of Birmingham League cricket as player and administrator.

On the field, he enjoyed a stunning period of success with the all-conquering Walsall side of the 80s and 90s. He won the Birmingham League title nine times skippering the side for five of those and a National Knockout success at Lord's in 1996.

Meanwhile Staffordshire, under the guidance of Archer, were the strongest Minor County side in the country at that time.

And when he decided to end his playing days, he took the lead role for the league by becoming general manager in 1999. It's a position he still fills today as the league gets set for the biggest shake-up in club cricket in 20 years.

Shake-up

It all began for Archer as a 13-year-old when he made his debut for Walsall's second team in 1969. But, at the time, cricket wasn't his number one sport, rugby was – and he wasn't bad at that either!

"I first played in 1969, in the second XI when I was 13 against Moseley. I batted number 10 and I got nought not out," recalls Archer. "I can't remember the exact circumstances why I played, but I started to play more regularly the following year.

"But I only ever played half-seasons until I was 18 because I went to Queen Mary's School in Walsall and they scheduled fixtures on a Saturday afternoon. I played in the first team for the first time in 1971. Then I played a few more in 1972 when we won the league."

The following year saw Archer play regularly for the first team. His promise earned him a call for Staffordshire and also attracted the attention of the first class counties. But the oval ball still came out on top, and there were no thoughts of becoming a professional cricketer. "In 1975 I went to Lougborough University. I also played rugby for them, so that also curtailed my cricket a bit," he added. "In 1974, I didn't play at all because I was picked to go on tour with the England under-19 rugby team.

SPORTING FEATURE

By Nick Elwell

It was very enjoyable to play in a very good side and to be a major cog in it, both as captain and as a player.

"That was a bit of a watershed year for me cricket wise, because at that time I'd had invitations to play for a couple of county second XIs – Derbyshire and Warwickshire – but I couldn't fulfil them in. Cricket was very much a second sport, really, until the early 80s."

As a fly-half or full-back he played for Moseley who, with the game an amateur sport, played in the country's top division.

"Looking back, cricket wise, and at what I eventually did with Minor Counties and Walsall, I have no regrets whatsoever."

Archer also enjoyed a successful career outside of cricket, in advertising and marketing, that eventually saw him run David Archer Associates, a company set up by his father. And while business was going well, the cricket was going even better as Walsall ruled the roost locally and Staffordshire nationally. "I won the title nine times as a player and I was skipper for five of those," he said.

"The 90s was a big era of success. We won the title in 92, 94, 96, 99 and also beat Chorley in the National KO at Lord's in 96. It was very enjoyable at the time to play in a very good side and to be a major cog in it, both as captain and as a player. It was a very, very strong side and the fact that we won National Knockout in 1996 while our first, second and third teams all won their leagues, we had a very reasonable claim to be the strongest club in the country at that time."

Archer played a key role as he accumulated nearly 11,000 top flight Birmingham League runs – a Walsall record. He claimed a unique double in 1989 as he finished top of the league and Minor Counties batting averages.

Not surprisingly, the appearances at the home of cricket are highlights – he also led Staffordshire out there in 91, 92 and 93, missing out on three successive Minor County Championship and KO doubles when they lost to Devon in 92.

But he has played against some of the world's best down the years, and two encounters with West Indies fast bowlers Sylvester Clarke and Malcolm Marshall while on duty with Staffs stand out.

"I opened with Steve Dean for Staffs against Surrey. Deany used to run to the wicket to make sure he took the first ball and I was quite happy to let him do it with Clarke bowling.

Opening

"We ran a three off the first ball. Clarke's opening spell was six overs and I faced five overs and five balls of of it! I ended up scoring 45 as a makeshift opener with Dickie Bird umpiring, which was an experience in itself.

Taking the various Test match players he crossed swords with out of the equation, three players stand out for Archer during his playing days.

"The two outstanding batters for me were Steve Dean and Roy Virgin at Walsall," he adds. "Roy came to Walsall straight from county cricket and he was a real narled ex-pro. He taught more about batting than anyone else.

"Ability wise, Deany was as good a batsman as I have ever played with and Keith Arnold was the best bowler I played with. They played in same team for nine to 10 years which was the bedrock of our success."

Archer decided to call time on his league career when the league came calling with the offer of a general manger role. He helped smooth the league's expansion that saw promotion and relegation introduced and eventually saw it go from one division to four. And now he is ready to oversee another revamp that will see the league cut to two divisions next season.

Trampolinists spring into action for contest

THE 2018 Trampoline, Tumbling & DMT British Championships springs into action at Arena Birmingham next month.

Spectators can witness the return of history-making Olympic silver medal trampolinist Bryony Page on home soil, as she takes on stiff competition from world team bronze medallists Laura Gallagher and Kat Driscoll. Nathan Bailey and Luke Strong will go head-to- head for the men's senior trampoline crown, while disability trampoline gymnasts will also perform exhilarating routines in a bid for medals.

The senior tumbling teams will be led by 2018 European champion Lucie Colebeck, and her team-mates Yasmin Taite, Kristof Willerton, Greg Townley and Elliott Browne.

DMT gymnasts in action include newly-crowned Junior European team champions and individual senior gold medallist Kirsty Way.

The competition takes place on September 22 and 23. Tickets are on sale now via www.theticketfactory.com or by calling 0844 33 88 222.

Soap stars line up for charity match

CELEBRITIES from some of the nation's most popular soap operas will lace up their boots for a charity football match in Walsall.

Stars from Emmerdale, Hollyoaks and Coronation Street will line up on Sunday at Rushall Olympic against The Midcounties Co-operative, which organised the event.

Soap stars taking part include Ashley Taylor-Dawson and Jacob Roberts, better known as Darren Osborne and Damon Kinsella from Hollyoaks, Alan Halsall who plays Tyrone Dobbs in Coronation Street, and Anthony Quinlan, aka Pete Barton in Emmerdale. Fans can meet and greet the stars at the end.

Money raised will go towards local charities including sexual exploitation prevention charity Street Teams, Alzheimer's support groups ALZ Café and Monthly Alzheimer's Support Evenings as well as blind and sight loss support centre, Beacon Vision. Kick off is 2pm and entry is £8 adults, £5 children with family discounts available. Details and tickets on 07508 398092.

Trio net their place in national tournament

THREE Wolverhampton athletes have netted a call-up for the Severn Stars squad at the School Games at netball.

The School Games are a national multi-sport event for the UK's most talented school-age athletes and take place at Loughborough University from August 30 to September 2.

All three girls are 15 and attend Wolverhampton Girls High. They are twins sisters Halee and Rudee Robinson, who play for Yendys Netball Club, and team-mate Lucy Toor, who also represents Wasps Netball Club.

More than 1,400 athletes will compete across 11 sports, five of which disability disciplines. The Wolverhampton trio will follow in the footsteps of some of Britain's biggest sporting stars who have competed at the event before going on to senior international success.

Previous competitors include Paralympic champions Hannah Cockroft, Ellie Simmonds and Jonnie Peacock, Olympic champion Adam Peaty, heptathlete Katarina Johnson-Thompson and sprinter Adam Gemili.

Sport

In good Nick! 50 years of service to cricket
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Tivi are hot on the heels of Rangers

BLACK Country Rangers and Tividale have both started the West Midlands Premier season in dominant fashion.

Rangers are leading the way at this early stage following four victories from as many games – the latest being a 3-1 triumph at Haughmond on Saturday.

Tivi are hot on their heels after a 7-1 demolition of Bilston Town made it three from three.

Jake Healy, Luke Wilson and Liam Hughes got the goals for Rangers as they came out on top in Shropshire.

Boss Wayne Spicer said: "It was a good win. We had to be firing on all cylinders to get something against Haughmond, and they were. It's a great start."

Tividale may have blitzed Bilston, but Scott Hamilton's charges took the lead at Queen Street – through skipper Matt Barnett five minutes in.

Dave King's men drew level through Darragh Bustin. Demetri Brown then put them ahead. Bustin got his second before half-time, and Brown made it 4-1, substitute Rion Francis-Mills grabbed a brace, either side of Bustin completing his hat-trick from the penalty spot.

Third-bottom Dudley Town drew 2-2 with second-bottom Shifnal Town, while Dudley Sports were victorious, 4-2 at Cradley Town. Smethwick drew 1-1 with Bewdley Town.

In the West Midlands Division One, Tipton Town won a nine-goal thriller, 6-3 at Sikh Hunters.

Team Dudley drew 2-2 with Allscott and Gornal Athletic lost 2-0 to Droitwich Spa.

Poppies' day as hosts go top with victory over Yeltz

Kettering Town 2 Halesowen Town 0

KETTERING climbed to the top of the Premier Division Central table with a goal in each half at Latimer Park.

Yeltz made a decent start in their first competitive game against Kettering for almost 70 years. James Roberts fired over from a 10th minute corner after Asa Charlton headed back from the far post and Lee Hughes went close. But the hosts settled and took the lead six minutes before half-time through Marcus Kelly from the left after a neat pass from Lindon Meikle on a counter-attack from Halesowen's free-kick at the other end.

Chances on goal remained few in the second period although Halesowen came near to equalising after 65 minutes when a long clearance from goalkeeper Dan Platt was helped on by Hughes to Roberts, but his effort was tipped onto the bar by home goalkeeper Paul White.

But Kettering generally had the better of the second period and hit a couple of half chances off target.

Substitute Brett Solkhorn doubled the Poppies lead in the third minute of injury time.

Valiant effort by young pair in regatta

YOUNGSTERS Ben Nolan and Sophie Glazzard made history by becoming the first Dudley Rowing Club members to enter a Regatta. In fact the club itself is new to the regatta scene.

The pair entered the junior 15 single sculls at Warwick Regatta on Saturday.

Nolan was very unlucky in the draw as he was up against a youngster from Derby Rowing Club who had already won a silver medal at the junior rowing championships. Nolan fought very hard in his heat but lost by four lengths, but it was a very valiant effort. Glazzard, a young lady with a lot of determination was drawn against a sculler from Stratford-on-Avon.

After a very fast start she found herself in the lead for the first 200m of the 500m course, but "caught a crab" – her oar got stuck in the water.

Having lost the lead, she fought back to lose by just three lengths.

The racing commentator explained to the crowd how small Dudley Rowing Club is and the tiny stretch of water they have on the Reservoir in Netherton to train on. Bridgnorth Rowing Club are helping the local club by to transporting their own boats to regattas for the youngsters to use, as Dudley Rowing Club have no trailer facilities.

Two Midlands clubs have given them the opportunity to have an outing with them.

Both youngsters are now eagerly looking forward to entering Worcester Autumn Regatta on September 9. Coach Colin is also teaming up with Stan Butler the Bridgnorth Rowing Club secretary in the double sculls event.

LEON WINS IT FOR GLASSBOYS

Stourbridge 2 Rushden & Diamonds 1

LONG-SERVING Leon Broadhurst bagged a last-minute winner as Stourbridge snapped up maximum points against an impressive Rushden side.

Broadhurst slotted home from close range after Rushden had failed to clear from a free-kick.

That was after the Glassboys had gifted Rushden the opening goal on 10 minutes in this Evo-Stik Central Premier clash.

Defender Paul McCone completely mis-hit an attempted back-pass allowing John Dean to intercept and round Glassboys goalkeeper James Wren to net.

Stourbridge stepped up a gear and should have levelled on 24 minutes when dangerman Greg Mills rounded full-back Callum Westwood and was brought down. Luke Benbow saw his penalty turned around the post by Rushden goalkeeper Ben Heath.

Crowded

From the following corner, full-back Aaron Hayden netted, only to have the goal ruled out for a foul on Heath.

Stourbridge did level on the half hour when Mills again cut inside Westwood and fired into a crowded goalmouth. Everyone missed the ball as it flew into the far corner.

Stourbridge had to thank defender Jack Duggan for a goal-line clearance on 61 minutes after Joel Gyasi got behind the Glassboys defence.

At the opposite end Aaron Forde had a shot on the turn deflected wide and from the following corner, Heath clawed Duggan's header away.

The winner arrived on 90 minutes after Robbie Thompson-Brown was needlessly brought down by Jack Ashton. Thompson-Brown floated the ball to the far post where it was headed back across goal by substitute Stuart Pierpoint for Broadhurst to pounce and turn home.

Stourbridge visit Coalville on Saturday, kick off 3pm.

Cook and Doyle serve up wins

Grace Doyle, Yvonne Hicks from sponsors Hicks Hadley Estate Agents and Gemma Davis

YOUNG stars Grace Doyle and Fin Cook were the ace players as Stourbridge Tennis and Squash Club held their annual tournament.

Doyle collected the ladies' singles title after defeating Gemma Davis, while Cook overcame Joe Hart to clinch the men's trophy.

Jo Skym went home with the most medals after winning a remarkable five finals. Her haul included the ladies' doubles with Gina Strambi, the mixed doubles and veteran mixed doubles with Michael Luckley, the veteran ladies' doubles with Helen Walker and the veteran ladies' singles title.

Elsewhere, the men's doubles title went to Charles Hill and Jason Donoghue, while Steve Grove triumphed in the veterans men's singles.

Dennis Wyatt and Jon Rance were also victorious in the veterans men's doubles.

Rance, who helped organise the tournament, said: "It was a really fun, successful weekend. We had some high quality tennis.

"The event coincided with an open day at the club, with many locals in attendance.

"We've had three weeks of games culminating in the finals this weekend, so it was great that people could come look round."

Lead extends after hosts all out for 71

STOURBRIDGE steamrollered Lichfield for 71 at Collins Hill with Nathan Crudeli taking 5-13.

The visitors cantered to a seven-wicket win which maintained their lead at the top of the Birmingham League division three table.

Himley enjoyed a five-run victory over Wellington in the first division with 62 from Shehan Fernando as they battled their way to 188-9, with Second XI skipper Martin Weill taking 3-30 for the Shropshire side.

Imran Arif hit 53 for Wellington before skipper Wendell Wagner (61) took Wellington desperately close to victory. However, he was last man out at 183 with seven balls remaining.

Euan Wentworth took 3-22, for Himley, but Jamie Turner (3-41) took the vital wicket of Wagner to take the pressure off Himley.

A fourth wicket partnership of 105 between William Mashinge (107 not out) and veteran Rob Williams (61) saw Leamington to an excellent 264-5 against a misfiring Halesowen attack at Seth Somers Park.

Mashinge held the innings together while Williams' contribution was far more explosive, striking seven fours and three sixes in 42 balls.

After Ed Kilbee (55) was dismissed at 123-5, Halesowen crumbled to 167 all out, in 40 overs, off-spinners Nabeel Asghar (4-22) and Perry Derrick (3-48) doing the damage.

Neal struggles in race at Rockingham

BLACK Country racer Matt Neal suffered a tough weekend but came away with vital British Touring Car Championship Points at Rockingham.

The Stourbridge racer found himself on the back foot going into race day after the team was forced to change the engine on his car ahead of qualifying.

Delayed by an incident at the start, Neal fought hard in race one to finish in 18th spot and for races two and three had to settle for 14th and 15th place finishes.

Neal now sits in fifth place in the drivers' championship, 12 points off the top three.

★★★

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